IRISH 1798 COLLECTION
277

A

NARRATIVE

OF THE

CONFINEMENT AND EXILE

OF

WILLIAM STEEL DICKSON, D. D.

FORMERLY

MINISTER OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CONGREGATIONS OF BALLYHALBERT AND PORTAFERRY, IN THE COUNTY OF DOWN, AND NOW OF KEADY, IN THE COUNTY OF ARMAGH.

TO WHICH IS ANNEXED,

An account of an Assault committed on the Author, September 9th. 1811, *on his return from the* CATHOLIC MEETING *in the City of Armagh; with a sketch of proceedings consequent thereon.*

BY WILLIAM STEEL DICKSON, D. D.

Dublin:

Printed for the Author:

BY J. STOCKDALE, 71, ABBEY-STREET.

1812.

BX9225
.D5A3
1812

[ENTERED AT STATIONER'S HALL.]

ERRATA.

Page 3, line 22—for *Luchman*, read *Leechman*.
Page 4, line 1—after *obliges*, insert *me*.
Page 9, line 26—after *brethren*, a *period*.
Page 18, line 14—for *principles*, read *treasures*.
Page 19, line 25—for *Steward*, read *Stewart*.
Page 20, line 28—for *left*, read *slept*.
Page 29, line 10—for *these*, read *there*.
Page 39, line 4—for *affected*, read *effected*.
Page —, line 7—for *were*, read *was*.
Page 42, line 5—place *a*, after *first*.
Page —, line 27—for *me*, read *my*.
Page 46, line 11—for *Ballygurn*, read *Ballygown*.
Page 48, line 27—before *on*, insert *or*,
Page 52, line 9—for *Colonel*, read *Captain*.
Page 53, line 14—for *Montello*, read *Montalto*.
Page 55, line 15—for *Down*, read *the town*,
Page 66, line 22—for *Mr. Cluncy*, read *Mr. Cluney*.
Page 80, last line—for *Ventriloguist*, read *Ventriloquist*.
Page 113, line 2—for *British*, read *Scottish*.
Page 120, line 15—for *marry*, read *Bamff*.
Page 129, line 4—for *Stulker*, read *Stalker*.
Page 150, line 18—for 1810, read 1801.
Page 164, line 18—before *government*, prefix *of*.
Page 169, line 24—before *as*, insert *so*.
Page —-, line 22—for *many*, read *may*.
Page 175, last line—for *surmounted*, read *surrounded*.
Page 185, line 8—for *rhu*, read *rheu*.
Page 213, line 5—for *blended*, read *blind-led*.
Page —-, line 23—for *insiduous*, read *insidious*.
Page —-, line 25—for *the*, read *to*.
Page 245, line —for *constrained*, read *overstrained*.

Let not the preceding long list of errata be imputed to the printer. From my incapacity of writing plain, for several months, and the impossibility of my attending the press, less could not be expected—many errors in pointing, for the same reasons, were unavoidable, as will appear to the readers.

W. S. D.

REV. DR. DICKSON'S

NARRATIVE.

HOWEVER painful it may be to a modest mind to obtrude itself, and its concerns, on the notice of the public—and still more painful to enter into details, which may excite a disagreeable sensation in any of the human kind—yet, circumstances frequently occur, in life, from which such details become a duty, to self, to society, to truth, justice, and honor. In such circumstances, for several years past, I have felt myself unfortunately placed. Had these ceased to operate, perhaps, I should never have taken up my pen to record them; most assuredly, I would never have exposed them to public animadversion. But, as this has not been the case, and even now is not, I flatter myself that I shall not be deemed unjustifiable, after a long forbearance, in presenting them to the eyes of my countrymen; and, from past experience, I feel emboldened to confide in their candor, and hope for their indulgence.

As this detail will principally consist of grievances, severe in their pressure, extensive in their operation, and of long continuance, it will naturally be supposed that the criminality

must have been great for which they have been inflicted, under a government, equally *celebrated* for justice and mercy; and aggravated by an ecclesiastical body, from which unmerited severity should never be suspected.

That the foundation of this supposition may be fairly estimated, I shall not confine myself to the *alleged* proximate causes of the grievances of which I complain. I shall briefly and fairly recite, so far as I can possibly recollect, every material occurrence of my life, and every part of my public conduct, previous to my long confinement and exile, which can be supposed to have incurred the wrath of the Irish government, or those who exercised its powers, in 1798; and the *pious* aud *loyal* severity of a small, but, latterly, a dominant party, among my rev. fathers and brethren of the synod of Ulster. This recital, I trust, will enable my readers to judge impartially between them and me; and I have no doubt but their judgment will be founded in justice.

Of the early part of my life I shall say little. My boyish years were spent in the usual, and, I am sorry to add, almost useless routine of Irish country schools. Indeed, I might say, to me altogether useless, had it not been for the paternal attention and valuable instructions of the rev. Robert White, then Presbyterian minister of Templepatrick, in the county of Antrim.

trim. To him I am indebted for my initiation into any thing approaching to knowledge of the elements and structure of the Latin and Greek languages—as also of logic, metaphysics, morals, and natural theology. In fact, he first taught me, not only to reason, but to think.

On my going to the college of Glasgow, in my seventeenth year, I was happy in the friendship, as well as in the instructions, of several of the professors, particularly Mr. Moorhead, professor of Latin, one of the most general scholars of his day; and Dr. Adam Smith, a man well known, and justly celebrated, in all the nations of Europe. To the latter I owed much—very much indeed—during the short time of his continuance in the University, after my entrance. To Mr. Moorhead I was indebted, not only for his instructions, and the care with which he was pleased to direct the course of my studies; but for an early introduction to the learned, liberal, and pious Dr. Lychman, principal of the University—A man, whose name will ever be venerated by the friends of religious liberty, learning, truth, and unadulterated christianity. In my intercourse with him, I enjoyed every advantage which a youthful mind, engaged in the pursuit of knowledge, could reasonably hope for: and such was his friendship, and that of Mr. Moorhead, that they honored me with their correspondence, as long as they lived.

Gratitude here obliges to mention another name, which I must ever recollect with affectionate esteem. That is the name of Mr. John Millar, then professor of law, in the same University—a name too well known, in the literary and political world, to require encomium. To him I had the happiness of being introduced, rather as a friend than a student. And, by him was my attention first directed to jurisprudence, the principles of government, and the respective advantages and disadvantages of the different forms under which it may be constructed and administered.

What particular effects his instructions then had upon my mind, I cannot now pretend to say. This only I know, and this I acknowledge, that they, and a few books to which he directed my attention, produced a yet unaltered conviction that absolute monarchy is not the best possible government, except in the hands of absolute perfection—that aristocracy is, and ever must be, a bad government—that despotism, under the *masque* of limited monarchy, a mixed government, or a free state, is worse—that any government, by *favoritism*, is worse still—and, that a government, of whatever description, the administration of which is entirely submitted to a faction, or sect—and, particularly, to upstarts and underlings of such faction—

faction—subject to the influence, and liable to the control, of spies, informers, and mercenary clerks in office, is worst of all.

In regard to a republic, or democracy, political theorists have presented nothing that could satisfy my mind. The states so called, whether antient or modern, are sources of information equally unsatisfactory. In no two of them has the constitution been the same. Their fate is the only thing in which they have been ever similar. In fact, rational republicanism, as appears to me, has never had a fair trial. And, as the executive power, under every form of Government, seems to be necessarily entrusted to an individual; while the right of legislation is inherent in, and inseparable from, the people, whether that might be exercised in mass, or by representation, the difference between a limited monarchy and a well constituted republic is rather in name than reality, provided the chief magistrate be elected by the state, and amenable to the laws, under which he derives his authority. Whether he be denominated emperor, king, duke, stadtholder, consul, or president, is a matter of no importance.

This last paragraph I have inserted, that my readers may be enabled to form some general idea of my political creed, and the principles

ples on which they are to judge of my political conduct. Let me request that their judgment may be guided by it, and it alone.

Soon after my final return from college, I was prevailed upon, by the flattering solicitations of my early and venerated friend Mr. White, to become a candidate for the office of a preacher of the gospel, much sooner than I intended, or ought, to have done; and, after passing through the usual trials, was licensed in March 1767.

During the four succeeding years, the frequent excursions which I was obliged to make to vacant congregations, some of which were many miles distant, not only extended my connexions, but gave me access to many families of rank and respectability, in the counties of Down and Antrim, of whose kind attentions I shall ever cherish a pleasing and grateful remembrance.

Among these I have the honor of mentioning that of the late Alexander Stewart Esq., father to the present earl of Londonderry, and grandfather to lord viscount Castlereagh. Him I mention particularly, not only in acknowledgment of many favors, which I owed to his kind attentions, but in expression of my sincere and unabated respect for his memory, as a man of polite and pleasing manners, a clear and

and comprehensive understanding, and principles truly liberal, both in politics and religion. It is true, he had no small share of ambition; but it was an ambition to raise his family to honor and Influence, in his country, for his country's good. Would to God, such ambition had continued to glow in the breast of his family, and that it glowed there still!

In the year 1771, I was ordained to the charge of the congregation of Ballyhalbert, in the barony of Ardes, and county of Down; and became an husband and a farmer.

Thus become stationary, I devoted myself, almost entirely, to my parochial and domestic duties, or the studies connected with them, till the commencement of the unnatural, impolitic, and unprincipled, war with America. Having paid considerable attention to jurisprudence, in the course of my studies, and read Locke, Montesquieu, Puffendorf, &c. &c. my mind instantly revolted against the mad crusade; and, while I regretted its folly, I execrated its wickedness. Feeling as I did, and detesting the meanness, as much as the immorality, of dissimulation, I never concealed either my ideas, or sentiments, on the subject. Hence, my expressions gave great offence to all the dependants of government. The friends of the then secretary for the Northern department, who constituted a great portion of the landed interest

rest of the county, were equally provoked to anger; and their anger was, afterwards, kindled into rage, by my preaching on the principles, object, tendency, and probable consequences, of the war, on two days, appointed as fasts, during the contest A general outcry was raised against me, in which those, who never heard me preach, were very loud; and those, who had never seen me, were louder still. "*Traitor*," "*Rebel*," "*Trumpeter of sedition*," were levelled at my name, wherever a few of the "lives and fortune" men of the day got warm around their bottle; and all agreed that "I ought to be d———d, as hanging was too good for me." In fact, if God, in his justice and mercy, had not been as deaf to their impecations against me, as he was to their prayers for success in the war, I might have been d———d to all eternity. However, I had my revenge in full. I published the two sermons, as they were preached, without the retraction, alteration, or addition, of a single word. They were read with avidity, found less pestilential than they had been represented, and, finally, justified, even in their conjectural parts, by events and the issue of the struggle.

About this time (1778) a new object presented itself, which strengthened my conviction of the *impolicy* of the war, aggravated my feelings, and roused the feeble energies of my mind

mind, in common with those of the great mass of my countrymen. The French espoused the cause of America; their fleets were riding triumphant in our seas, and insulting our coasts; our country was considered, by all, as in imminent danger; and government had declared its total inability to defend it. In this awful emergency, the desire of self-preservation gave birth to the general idea, and general resolution, of arming for self-defence. The city of Cork and town of Belfast took the lead in the execution. Other places soon followed their example. And, in a few weeks, a generous patriotic ardor, as if excited by a spark from Heaven, pervaded, animated, and actuated, the great body of the Irish people. Every city, town and village, swarmed with volunteers. In the country, the plough, the loom, and every other implement of useful arts, lent their youth, strength, and vigor, to the standard of the nation. Industry forewent a portion of its usual rest; whilst idleness betook itself to labor, and profligacy became sober; that they might be enabled, by their earnings, or their savings, to appear in arms, and in uniform, among their brethren, the idea of profession seemed to be obliterated. Physician, surgeon, and apothecary; lawyer and attorney—all were soldiers. Even the Presbyterian ministers were so fully inspired with the patriotism of the day, that, in several places, the rusty black was

exchanged for the glowing scarlet, and the title of "Reverend" for that of "Captain." In a word, such was the prevailing spirit, that, in a short time, a self-created, self-arrayed, and self-supported, army presented itself, which strangers contemplated with wonder, enemies with fear, and Friends with pride, exultation, and confidence.

Amidst the pleasing circumstances, which surrounded this institution, one, equally shameful and impolitic, occurred. The Catholics, in great numbers, and with great zeal offered themselves as volunteers, in common with their Protestant and Presbyterian countrymen. Through the greater part of Ulster, if not the whole, their offers were rejected, and, in some places, not without insult In my own neighbourhood, this was universally the case. Hence, jealousy and distrust became prevalent, and, in some instances, excited alarm. Impressed with a sense of the impolicy and danger of such conduct, and equally so with its injustice, I not only argued against and reprobated it, in conversation, but, in a sermon, preached before the Echlin Ville volunteers, March 1789, expressed my opinions, on the subject, so clearly, as to offend all the Protestant and Presbyterian bigots in the country. This, once more, raised the cry of rebellion against me; and some were so liberal as to pronounce me "a Papist

"a Papist in my heart," for the very substantial reason, among others, that the maiden-name of the parish-priest's mother was "Dickson." However, the general tenor of the sermon was so much approved, being calculated to promote the volunteer cause, that I was earnestly solicited, by a number of zealous friends to the institution, to publish it, *with a modification of the part respecting the admission of Catholics to the volunteer ranks.* To the publication I felt little objection: But, to the Modification I submitted, with great reluctance, and merely from respect to, what I then thought, superior judgment, and, at least, an equal zeal in the public cause. However, I feel happy that I retained, *in print,* so much of the shadow of what I expressed, *in substance,* from the pulpit, as will give a faint idea of what then were, now are, and, I presume, ever will be, my opinions and feelings, on that important subject. The passage, as modified, is as follows:

"3dly. Ye ought to extend your views of doing good beyond the narrow limits of party, or outward profession, in matters civil, or religious. The names of party often excite jealousies; and these, again, are apt to resolve the most generous actions into the worst designs. This is, particularly, the case with us, in time of war. As our enemies are generally of the

Popish religion, those of that denomination, among us, are apt to construe measures of public safety into private design, and attribute every armament to enmity against them. To remove such injurious suspicions is an object well deserving your attention, and your conduct ought to shew, that ye have not taken up arms, for this or the other denomination, but for your country—that it is not your purpose to spread alarm, terror, or desolation, but to check them in their wild career—that it is only against the enemies of your country, liberty, and peace, be their religion what it may, that your arms are pointed—and, that whoever is the friend of these, is your friend, and the object of your protection."

During some years after this, little occupied the public mind, or employed the public tongue, except volunteering and volunteers. The system was now become universal, with a very few exceptions. Many gentlemen of landed property, who, at first opposed, or barely tolerated, the measure; and even some who seemed to dread the armament of the people, as much as they detested American independence, or, horror-struck, anticipated a French debarkation, assumed the uniform of their country: some, as was supposed, merely to keep their tenantry under their own control, and others, because volunteering was become fashionable.

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Be this as it may, in the year 1782, Ulster was so completely armed, that, at a review, in Belfast, the number of patriotic soldiers was deemed little inferior to that of the spectators, capable of bearing arms. In a sham-fight, on the day after this review, Robert Stewart now lord viscount Castlereagh, then only in his thirteenth year, commanded the light infantry of the Ards independents, of which his father was colonel. His company consisted, mostly, of boys, a few years older than himself. Their appearance attracted universal notice, and excited the most pleasing emotions, as it promised a succession of patriot soldiers, under whose banners Ireland would recline in safety. The conduct of young Stewart did more. The manner, in which he conducted his boyish band, through the variegated, and long-protracted engagement, displayed such germs of spirit, and judgment, as excited admiration, extorted applause, and laid the foundation of that popularity, which he afterwards obtained.

One circumstance, of which I was a witness, had a most powerful effect on the public feeling. The sham-fight was a representation of an approach to, and attack on, the town of Belfast. The Ards independents, commanded by col. Stewart, now earl of Londonderry, formed the van of the invading army. By them the advanced guard of the defenders of their country was

was completely defeated. In their flight, they left a small party, with one piece of cannon, on a rising ground, to cover their retreat. To drive in this party, and take possession of the cannon, the younger Robert and his boyish band was dispatched; and the affair was so conducted on both sides, that some officers, who were present, declared that it bore the strongest resemblance to real action. That a great majority of our youthful heroes believed it to be such, I am fully convinced. When the defendants gave way, and abandoned their gun, young Stewart rushed forward in the ardor of his soul, grasped it in his arms, then mounted its carriage, waved his cap, and, with tears of triumph, huzzaed to the main body, and called them to come on.

This circumstance had a most powerful effect on the then ardent mind of the multitude present; and their account of it excited high expectations of, and a warm attachment to, the rising Robert, through the whole county. From that day, many began to look forward to, and speak of him, as their future representative. "If such be the boy, what may we not expect of the man!" was to be heard in, almost every company; and I own that my own expectations were as extravagant, and my attachment as enthusiastic, as those of any other man living.

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The continued effect, and importance, of this circumstance, were strongly marked in the year following. In that year, the first great contest for the representation of the county, took place, between the Hillsborough and Stewart family, or, as it was generally considered, between the court and country interests. At the commencement of the election, the success of Mr. Stewart was confidently spoken of. His conduct in parliament, during the preceding seven years, had fully justified his patriotic professions, satisfied the expectations, and secured the support, of a numerous and powerful body in the county. Yet, even this well-earned popularity was weakened by a toadish coldness, and haughty distance of deportment, which disgusted and alienated many, who had been esteemed warm and steady friends to the independence of the county. The consequence was, that the contest, at the end of five weeks, became doubtful; and, a few days afterwards, notwithstanding every exertion of Mr. Stewart's friends, his conduct rendered it desperate, by a dereliction of Mr. Ward, with whom a junction had been formed and ratified, under the sanction of their *common* friends, for the *common* support of the *common* cause. This dereliction degraded him in the estimation of his warmest advocates; and his subsequent conduct, in the house of commons, respecting a petition against the sheriff's return,

and

and the committee which presented it, reduced him so low in the eyes of the county, that, I believe, all thoughts of attempting to reinstate him were totally abandoned. However, he avoided the disgrace of a public rejection, by taking shelter some time afterwards, under the shade of a peerage.

My attachment to, what I considered as the good of my country; and an attachment, scarcely subordinate, to the Stewart family, induced me to devote my time, my labor, and my purse, to their joint service, from beginning to end of this long and expensive contest. And as I had the *honor* of being a member of one of the committees, by which it was conducted, every public measure, and public character, came under my observation. Among the latter, that of the younger Robert Stewart already mentioned, was the most attractive and interesting. He was every where, with every body, and his mild manners, unremitting attention, fascinating address, and manlike conversation, revived the impressions of the preceding year, and gave strength to the prejudices conceived in his favor.

Among many instances of this which occurred, during the election, I hope I shall be excused for the mention of one. A few days before its close, I brought forward about forty freeholders,

Freeholders, whom I had *formerly* engaged to wait for my call, and of a description which would have done honor to any Country. They were all wealthy farmers, and remarkably well mounted; and, as volunteering had given them some idea of order, I brought them in, in Indian file, and, after *proudly* parading the town drew them up, two deep, before Mr. Stewart's lodgings. This was the unfortunate morning, though I did not then know it, on which Mr. Stewart had abandoned Mr. Ward; and with him, as some maliciously said afterwards, "*honor and honesty*," the motto of their junction. Ere my arrival, the sheriff and his deputy had been some time in court, and Mr. Stewart could not make up his first tally. On seeing me, therefore, the expressions of joy were considerable. The young Robert rushed into the street, and, throwing his arms round my horse's neck, exclaimed: "O. Mr. Dickson, are *all* these for my father?" "Yes, my dear boy," said I. On this, he darted into the house, and, in an instant, returned, crying: "See! See! father! See what Mr. Dickson has brought! I would rather be at the head of such a yeomanry, than be the first lord ever a king created." The multitude, who crowded the street around us, seemed delighted with his spirit, and my corps was not less so with his compliment. Their language to each other was; "this is our noble young captain—he's a sweet boy—*he'll* be our man yet, if he lives."

During the succeeding seven years, which were devoted to his education, his popularity not only continued, but encreased; and that he justly deserved it, I can personally testify, as the greater part of that time he spent in my neighbourhood, and almost under my eye. He was then the pupil of Mr. Sturrock, Chancellor of Portaferry, now Dr. Sturrock, Archdeacon of Armagh—a man, whose sweetness of temper, gentleness of manners, and correctness of morals, were as well calculated to conciliate the heart to virtue, as his judgment, taste, and literary attainments were to enrich the understanding with the principles of knowledge. Under the Doctor's tuition, his pupil's attention was unremitting, and his progress rapid. The knowledge of this being circulated, added to his reputation, and the hopes of his friends: and his going to the university under the auspices of the late Lord Camden, whose memory will ever be revered by the real friends, of the British empire, and of liberty; the full benefit of his Lordship's instructions and example; with the additional advantage of prosecuting his studies, under the special tuition of the celebrated Dr. Watson; led to the belief that he would enter upon the theatre of public life, not only as a profound scholar, but an accomplished statesman, a zealous friend to civil and religious liberty, and an honest advocate for the independence

pendence of the Irish legislature, and a radical reform in the representation of the Irish people.*

This belief was more than confirmed, if possible, on his first appearance in the county, previous to his election, in 1790. On his canvass, he was received, with marked cordiality, and expressive joy; and these were kindled into enthusiasm, by his strong expressions of attachment to the liberty of his country, of ardor for reform, and solemn declarations that, if returned to parliament, he would use all his efforts to obtain it.—Nay, as some averred, by expressions of patriotism much stronger.

The effect of such addresses, added to his former popularity, in such a county as Down then was, may be easily conceived. In fact, it was such, that, I am fully, convinced, had the

 freeholders

* While Mr. R. Stewart was with Mr. Sturrock, an incident occurred, which I would not dare to recite, had it not been published at the time, and supported by a cloud of witnesses equally numerous and respectable. These consisted of the late Lord Camden, the late Dr. Haliday of Belfast, Dr. Sturrock, Mr. Cleland, the Household at Mount Stewart, the Rosemount family, and all the surrounding neighbours. The personal friendship, determined fortitude, calm composure, and patient perseverance, exhibited, placed the youth far above the friends novel, and the heroes of romance. In hope of procuring the original publication in the Belfast paper, before this Narrative shall be printed off, I shall reserve every thing farther, on this subject, for an Appendix: See No. 1.

freeholders been left to an unbiassed choice, nine tenths of their number would have voted in his favor.

The contrary, however, was the case. His popularity was met by an opposition as formidable as power, interest, or personal favor, could excite. The influence of the government, thro' its dependents and expectants; that of a peer of the first property in the county; amiable in private character; unrivalled as a landlord; who had brought under obligations a great proportion of the gentlemen of smaller fortune, by providing for their sons, in the army, navy, revenue, and church; to whom many others looked up for preferment; and, who had two boroughs at his disposal; with all their dependents and de-dependents were marshalled against him.

To meet, and counteract, this opposition, every friend to the youthful candidate, and the cause to which he had pledged himself, set out to canvass in his favor. In the enthusiasm of the day, my mind was not indifferent, nor my exertions withholden. For several weeks, previous to the election, and the three months, during which it continued, I was on horseback, almost every day; and seldom left in my own house, at night. In fact, I rode one horse, nearly to death, reduced another to half his value,

value, and expended above 50l. part of which I was obliged to borrow: Nor can I now say, whether I was most actuated by affectionate esteem for the youthful candidate, confidence in his professions, or zeal for the interests of my country, in my quixotical excursions. Under the joint influence of the whole, I canvassed, far and wide, regardless of interest, influence, and connexions; and succeeded so far as to provoke some of my best friends, by voting their tenants, for Mr. Stewart, contrary to their orders, and in their presence. Of that success, whatever it was, I was proud, at the time: tho', God knows, frequently have I regretted it, since, in the bitterness of my heart, not only on account of my country, but real pity for the then successful candidate. Even now, I cannot repress the thought that, had he been happily rejected, on that occasion, he would never have reached that pinnacle from which he hath fallen, at least unpitied—that Ireland would yet have been the independent, proud, powerful, and affectionate sister of Britain—her Presbyterian church unfettered, and its extension unchecked.*

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* Of my success on that occasion, lord C. retained a much higher opinion than I ever expressed, if a judgment may be formed from the following anecdote. A short time after my arrest, a particular friend of mine, alarmed by the dreadful reports industriously and artfully circulated of my criminality and consequent danger, asked his lordship, "what was to be done with me?" His answer was, "I do not know. Every

Be this as it may, our favorite was returned to parliament, though under age, at the time of his election, and, for a short time, retained his popularity, by some speeches in the house, and attendance on patriotic societies.

In the year 1791, the Whig Club of Dublin was warm, loud, and diffuse, in the cause of reform. A Northern Whig Club was formed, in Belfast, on the same principles. Of this the Stewart family were prominent members. About the same time, a third Society was instituted, under the auspices of the Duke of Leinster, and other characters, then, highly respectable. Whilst the two former, by speeches and toasts, roused and animated the spirit of reform, the other zealously recommended the institution of Societies, *over all Ireland*, that the great body of the people might unite, and forward petitions to the throne, and to parliament, for its attainment. Pamphlets, were, every where, circulated

thing possible has been done to procure evidence against him; but we cannot obtain a single sentence, *tho' we know he is guilty?*" "My God:" exclaimed the gentleman, "if that be the case, why keep him in confinement? Do you mean to destroy both him and his family?" "O sir" replied his lordship, "from his popularity in the year 90, I know he would be a very dangerous person to leave at liberty now."

His lordship might likewise have recollected 83. Even in that year I enjoyed some share of popularity, as appears in a proceeding page. And, whatever that share may have been, his father and he enjoyed exclusively the benefit of its exertions.

lated, for the same purpose. Landlords, in many places, are said to have distributed them among their tenants. And, from the Agent's office of Mr. S———t, if report spoke truth, they were issued in multitudes.

Thus sanctioned and stimulated, the people formed themselves into societies, in every town, village, and parish, through Ulster, and soon extended themselves over the kingdom. From the importance of the object, a test was drawn up, and initiation, to these societies, became regular and solemn. Under the strongest impressions of this importance, I took the test, so early as December 1791, in presence of "the first society of united Irishmen in Belfast," three of whom were members of the "Northern Whig Club.

In this society, I do not know that my name was ever enrolled, as a member; but this I can positively assert, that, so far as I can recollect, I never was present at any succeeding meeting of them, as a society, or any meeting of any other society, in Belfast, or elsewhere, where any member was admitted, or other business, peculiar to united Irishmen, transacted. It is true, when in Belfast, where I frequently was, I found myself surrounded by united Irishmen; and the union of Irishmen was, on every occasion, the common topic of conversation,

tion. In these conversations, I always took a decided part, as it was well known, from the year 1778, that parliamentary reform, and Catholic emancipation, without which reform was only an empty name, were objects near and dear to my heart. Nay in all conversations of the kind, for some years afterwards, I used all my powers, and influence to elucidate the principles, prove the necessity and diffuse the spirit, of union, with a view to attain them; and this I did, in the full conviction, not only, that I was laboring to insure the security of his Majesty's throne, and independence of Ireland, but discharging a most important, moral and religious duty. In these efforts, I felt a flattering encouragement from the resolutions, &c. with which the public papers teemed in the Spring of 1792: and the enthusiasm, with which all ranks looked forward, in the beginning of that summer, to the volunteer reviews, and the celebration of the French Revolution, tempted me to hope that government would see the wisdom, and feel the necessity, of conceding the measures, in question, to the public will.

This hope, as far as it related to Catholic Emancipation, was soon checked by an artful manœuvre. This was the holding up a prospect of concession, not "total and immediate," but "gradual and progressive." The reasons assigned

signed for this delusive measure were, the profound ignorance of the Catholics, and consequent incapacity, not only of enjoying, but *bearing* liberty. These reasons, or rather *shameless pretexts*, though equally *unfounded*, *insulting*, and *blasphemous*, imposed on a few, and gave others an excuse for opposing the public will, and public wish.

To my astonishment, this delusion operated on a small party, in the enlightened and liberal town of Belfast; and displayed itself on the 14th. of July, after a public review. In a discussion, before the great volunteer body, there assembled, gradual emancipation was introduced, and pleaded for, on the ground of Catholic ignorance and incapacity; and the language, in which the impolicy, danger, and folly of total and immediate enfranchisement was expressed, excited disgust and indignation in the minds of the people. Several gentlemen ably rejected, and warmly reprobated, the assertions made, and sentiments expressed, by the promoter of opposition to the general sense of the assembly; and, latterly, something too warm seemed to pervade it, of which I feared the increase and the consequences. Under the influence of this fear, and in hope of checking the heat of debate, I reluctantly yielded to the impulse of addressing the meeting: and, as argument was unnecessary, where there was nothing like argument

to answer, after what had fallen from other gentlemen, I only hung a few rags of ridicule on the step-ladder of "gradual emancipation," which were eagerly laid hold of, and, in the heat of imagination, formed into a mantle, under which Mrs. "Time to Time" looked so silly, that her God-fathers were ashamed of, and abandoned her. In consequence, Lady "Total and Immediate" was unanimously adopted, embraced, and cheered.

From the publications in the Irish papers, and the multitudes, from all the neighbouring counties, who were present, on this occasion, the decision of the day was proclaimed far and wide, and, every where approved of. And as a number of gentlemen, from Dublin, warm friends of reform, and of their country, attended the meeting, it was soon known in the metropolis, by all ranks of people, and celebrated with rapture. New life, strength, and activity, were infused into the friends of union. The public papers teemed with resolutions, in its favor, from every town, every village, and every volunteer association, in Ulster, so as scarcely to leave room for the toasts, *wet* or *dry*, of the demi-patriotic societies, denominated "Whig Clubs," which embraced a great portion of the nobility, and landed property, of the province.

Towards

Towards the end of the year, the idea of parish and county meetings was started, and eagerly pursued, till it led to a provincial convention, at Dungannon, February 15th. 1793. The object of these meetings was so clearly expressed, in the language of the county of Down, January 21st. and of the Dungannon meeting, February 15th. 1793, that it can neither be misunderstood, nor misrepresented, while words are allowed to have any meaning, or those, who use them, to possess common sense. This object was, that, " by free and general communication, the provincial will, regulated by the wisdom of the province, may be concentrated in a point, from which it may be directed to the other provinces of the kingdom, and flow, with clearness, harmony, and strength, into the houses of parliament, and presence of Majesty;" " in order that a complete and radical reform may be speedily effectuated."

That, with a view to this reform, I used every exertion, of which I was capable, both in public and private, to convince all, with whom I was conversant, of its necessity to restore our paralysed constitution, conciliate the public mind, and establish his Majesty's throne in the affections of the people; and of the equal necessity of *union*, among Irishmen, in order to obtain, perhaps, I might say, *extort* it, from the faction

of the day, I need not attempt to deny. Were I so weak as to do so, the public thanks of my congregation, which embraced the Presbyterians of half a barony, and my own publication of part of what I preached, as the politics of the bible, on days set apart, by proclamation, for praying the politics of the existing ministry, would shamefully confute me.* Besides, as I was, by particular desire, as well as public appointment, present at and took a decided part in all the meetings of the county of Down, previous to the Dungannon convention. Meetings, unprecedented in numbers, and embracing the rank and property of the county—and, afterwards, at the Dungannon convention, as a delegate for the Barony of Ards. As I had no inconsiderable

* At this time, every art was used, and every power exerted, by the enemies of emancipation, to seduce and intimidate my congregation, and not without a partial success. Many families withdrew from my Ministry, for a season; and, an attempt was made to have a new meeting-house erected, for their accommodation. These things only enlivened my sense of duty, and roused me to encreased exertion. To public addresses from the pulpit, I added local visitations of the districts into which my parish was divided, and even domiciliary calls upon the *disaffected*. Thank God, my efforts succeeded. The wanderers returned to my fold, and, in the gratitude of their hearts, published the address of thanks, to which I have alluded. But, strange to tell, these things reached the eye, or ear, of the noted sir R. Musgrave, who has presented them to the world, with his usual colouring of *malignity* and *falsehood*, in his *medley* of *misrepresentations*.—N. B. A specimen of the sermons, as published in 1793, is subjoined to this Narrative.

able share in preparing, and modifying, the resolutions of both, and fully expressed my ideas, in the discussion of the whole—and as these resolutions were extensively published—my political creed, sentiments, and views, could not be unknown, either to the people, or government, of Ireland. I say, "*government*," as to Dungannon in particular, as, I believe, it is well known that it, not only, had eyes, pens, and tongues, these, to watch, record, and report, all that passed; but a friend, in the disguise of a delegate, to offer the people of Ulster a frothy collation of whip-sillabub, garnished with a few faded flowers of oratory, instead of that substantial bread of reform, so necessary to restore the Irish constitution, and which the voice of Irishmen so eagerly called for.

The liberality, wisdom, and moderation, of the Dungannon resolutions had very great, and opposite effects, on the government and people. With the people, all was hope and confidence, that parliament, *pledged as it was by promise*, would take up the question of reform, and wisely concede something conciliatory. This season, however, was of short duration. Government were alarmed, or pretended to be so; and, in their alarms, whether real or pretended, gave themselves up to madness, instead of profiting by the lessons of wisdom, and imitating the

the moderation and liberality of a loyal people. Hence, a series of acts of parliament, which followed each other, with hasty pace, and voice terrific, extinguished hope, revived alarm, and excited a mixed feeling of sorrow, indignation, and horror. And indignation nearly kindled into rage, on the apostacy of a majority of the delegates, who had appeared at Dungannon, as the zealous friends of a parliamentary reform, which would embrace all religious denominations: and enemies, equally zealous, to a war with France; a war which they had reprobated, and the British empire has, long since, pronounced "accursed." The concurrence of the same apostates, afterward, in proclaiming the Northern counties, out of the king's peace, without cause, or provocation, except in the case of one county, and a few small districts on its borders,, so completely exasperated the people, that disturbances would certainly have then taken place, had it not been for the exertions of those very persons, whom the agitating proclaimants afterwards devoted to ruin, *perhaps for these very exertions.* During the years 1795 and 6, when public provocations did not succeed, private emissaries were sent abroad to circulate alarms, and provoke jealousies. In my neighbourhood, it was not uncommon to see the lower Presbyterians on one day, and the Catholics on another, running from house to house, under the alarm that a massacre was to take

take place on the succeeding night, and that their neighbours, with whom they had lived in peace and friendship, were to be the perpetrators. These alarms, and alarmists, I encountered and exposed; and, happily, with success. The effect, however, as to myself, was only charges of sedition, and threats of vengeance, as opportunity of executing them did not then occur.

In October 1796, an attack was made on my congregation, in which it was confidently expected that I must fall. On the information, as was said, of one *Carr*, a poor weaver, a few of my hearers of great respectability, and, with some of whom, I lived in habits of the closest intimacy, were made prisoners, by Col. Savage, of Portaferry, Lord Castlereagh, and some other gentlemen of the neighbourhood, and brought in custody to Portaferry-house, where they were confined for a night, and, on the day following, transmitted to Downpatrick. At the same time Carr was sent off to Dublin, lodged in Kilmainham, and, for a season comfortably supported: nor were his wife and children in the country, unprovided for. His information was confidently depended on, as sufficient to convict all to whom it extended, and strong hopes were entertained that he might be induced to implicate me. This circumstance was communicated to a friend of mine, by an officer

officer of the North York Fencibles; and, being whispered about, I was warmly solicited to take the benefit of a proclamation, which had been formerly issued, or to leave the country. Conscious that truth could not charge me, with word or action, which could expose me to prosecution, I refused to do either. On the contrary, I visited my hearers, confined in Down, every week, until the end of December, which added fresh fuel to the flame which was to consume me.

Luckily, for my friends, in confinement, I was tempted to make a trip to Dublin at that time. While there, I frequently visited a number of gentlemen, from Belfast, then prisoners in Kilmainham. On one of these visits, I was told of Carr, that he was in solitary confinement, precluded from all intercourse with those in the goal—that he was frequently visited by people from the castle, and then treated with great severity, *because his information fell short of his promises*—that he was sometimes nearly distracted, from a sense of guilt, and the distress of his wife and children, whom his seducers had then abandoned—and, that he could not prosecute, *to conviction*, one of the persons against whom he had sworn.

On my asking how this could be ascertained, I was told that I might hear it all from his own lips,

lips, if I chose, and my own character also, before I left the gaol. I need not say, that I embraced the opportunity with avidity, and begged that I might be gratified. One of the prisoners immediately went out, and, returning in a few minutes, told me that the yard was clear. Having received my instructions to keep close by the wall, I, and two of the prisoners, went out into the yard. One of them took a ball, and, after various attempts, succeeded in throwing it, through an open window, into an upper room. A man came to the window, returned the ball, and enquired what was wanted. Something was mentioned, respecting himself, which led him to a detail of all he had done, and all he had suffered. The detail was melancholy and infamous. It confirmed every thing told me, and discovered vastly more. On my name being mentioned, he gave me a most excellent character—perhaps, better than I deserved—declared that he had never *seen me, nor even heard of my being seen*, in any society of united Irishmen, *though every body believed that I was one*—that he had been frequently questioned about me, both in the North, and in Dublin—and, that the most tempting offers were made to him, if he would give information against me. On being pressed, in respect to

these offers, he declared that *a thousand pounds was to be his reward, on my conviction.**

Possessed of this information, my mind was easy in respect to my friends confined in Down; and, I own, I felt some satisfaction in the thought, that, should they be brought to trial, at the Spring assizes, I would have it in my power to expose their persecutors, through the very person, on whose information their conviction was thought certain, and my own not impossible. However, they were not brought to trial, and I was disappointed. The prisoners, in Kilmainham, knowing that Carr was to be brought to Down, to prosecute, informed him, from the yard as before, that his evidence would be rebutted, and himself exposed to prosecution, as I had overheard all his declarations to them, in the month of January. However, he was brought down, under a guard; but, when he saw

* About this time, as well as formerly, I was frequently cautioned to be on my guard, as I was, not only *strictly watched*, but in danger of *personal violence*. The foundation of these cautions was, in some measure, consolidated by anonymous papers, some of which were found, on the mornings of Sunday, in our meeting-house yard, and others in that of the Catholic chapel. A copy of one of these, which not only justifies the suspicion on which these cautions were founded, but points out the cause of irritations, will appear in the sequel of this Narrative. Besides these communications, I had several private letters, breathing threats, and denouncing me as more pestiferous than an *avowed* Papist.

saw me in Down, he *stagged*, and, unfortunately for me, assigned his reasons. Hence, resentment against me was increased; and the prisoners were holden over until the Summer assizes.

During that Summer, the spirit of reform was ardent and general as ever, and meetings called, in many counties. At a numerous meeting of gentlemen, in the county of Down, a call of the free-holders was unanimously agreed to, and advertised; but, before the day appointed, those of the king's county were dispersed by the military, and a meeting of the county of Kildare prevented by threats. This being known, the gentlemen of Down prevented a county meeting, by another advertisement, lest disturbances should arise, were military to interfere; but, to convince the people that they had not abandoned them, or their cause, they agreed to meet, at Ballynahinch, on the day previously appointed for a county meeting, and publish such a declaration and resolutions, as should there be approved of. The wisdom of this measure was justified by the event, as the military were ordered to Down, and the last of a large body from Blaris Camp, had passed through Ballynahinch, only a few hours before the gentlemen met there, of whom I had the honor, as usual, to be called as one.

The resolutions unanimously passed, at that meeting, fully satisfied the public mind, and the two last, as I am convinced they spoke truth, should have satisfied government, as to the great object of public desire. These declared "that reform alone was sought for;" and "that, if any such reform, as had been brought "into parliament, *by Mr. George Ponsonby*, was granted, the *public mind* would be *quiet, content*, and *happy*."

At all these meetings I was present, and, as formerly, took an active part, and expressed my opinions and sentiments, fully and explicitly, so that all my ideas and views, at this time, were as well known to every gentleman in the county, as they had been in the years 1792 and 1793.*

Previous to the summer assizes, it was understood that my friends, in goal, would, not only be tried, but prosecuted with keenness; and whispers

* For several months, previous to the last of these meetings, I had, not only the most unreserved and confidential intercourse with several gentlemen of the first respectability in the county, and the most active in public concerns, in respect to its object; but, at *their* desire, as well as for my own satisfaction, an intimate correspondence with some eminent lawyers, on the subject. One of these was a member of parliament, intimately connected with the few senatorial friends of *emancipating* reform, and second to none, in constitutional loyalty, abilities, eloquence, and undeviating political integrity.

For a specimen of this correspondence, see Appendix, No. 2.

whispers were circulated that *particular* lists of jurors were in preparation for the sheriff. Under these impressions, I went to down, the day previous to their commencement, to procure what information I could, consult with the prisoners, and, convinced as I was of their innocence, render them what assistance might be in my power. On the evening of my arrival, my success, in point of information, far exceeded, even, my hopes. I learned, from undoubted authority, that the *capital* conviction of my immediate connexions was despaired of; but that, in all probability, their trials would be again put off, on some pretext or other, in order to prolong their confinement, and aggravate the distress of themselves and families.

With this information I went to the goal; and having communicated it to the prisoners, advised them to instruct their counsel, to demand trial, or liberation, as they had been so long confined *without any charge brought against them*, to the great injury of their health, distress of their families, and ruin of their circumstances. To this they instantly acceded, and requested me to communicate their wish to counsellors Curran and Sampson, and enjoin them to be guided by it. This I did, early next morning; in consequence of which counsellor Curran immediately waited on the attorney general, and demanded the trial, or liberation, of the five prisoners from

from Portaferry, but received no answer. On this, I requested him to repeat his application, the day following, which he did, to no better purpose. On the third day, he did the same, tho' with reluctance; but, on his return, told me, that he had some hope of good, as the attorney general seemed surprised and agitated by the repetition and peremptoriness of his demand, which was then made for upwards of thirty prisoners, who had determined to follow the example of the other five. That counsellor Curran was not mistaken, respecting the effect of his last application to the attorney general, was rendered probable, by his (the attorney general) being in conclave with the judges, for two or three hours afterwards, and the consequent dispatch of an express, supposed to be for Dublin, which returned in about forty eight hours —by the judges not coming into court, till twelve o'clock, tho' notice had been given, the day before, that they would enter on crown-business, at nine, or ten—and, by their proclamation, on taking their seats, that persons, in the neighbourhood, summoned to attend as witnesses on trials for treasonable practices, might go home to their harvests, till Friday, as no business, of the kind, would be brought forward before that day. On that day, the express returned; soon after which the attorney general asked Mr. Curran, if his clients, on being liberated, would enter into recognizance to keep the peace, for

a given

a given time. As he could not answer this question, without consulting them, he and I left the court, for that purpose. However, all that could be affected was their consent to enter into personal recognizance for their appearance, when called on. This, being reported to the attorney general, were accepted with eagerness, and the whole were turned out, on the day following. And, as their liberation was, principally, attributed to my intermeddling, the resentment of their prosecutors arose almost to madness. In justice to the gentlemen of the country, I add, that few prosecutions were conducted, with eagerness, except where outrages were committed, which justly deserved the vengeance of the law; and, among these few, that of the people from my neighbourhood was conspicuous. The quarter, from which this proceeded, was suspected, from the zeal and activity of the Rev. John Cleland, who had been private tutor to lord Castlereagh, and then was vicar of Newtown Ards, and agent to earl of Londonderry. This zeal was obvious, both at the Spring and Summer assizes; and presumptions were so strong, of his having returned packed pannels to the sheriff, that the array was twice challenged, on that account. That he made returns was not denied, so far as I recollect, but the triers determined that they were not partial. That my persecution proceeded from the same quarter I was tempted to believe, for reasons to be

be mentioned afterwards, as well as from what I have already written; and, from which the public may judge, whether or no, my belief was well founded.

Thus far, I have detailed every part, which I can possibly recollect, of my public conduct, from my first interference in the political concerns of my country. In this detail, I have neither concealed, nor attempted to palliate, either act, or motive. I have even related more than my enemies knew, or all their band of informants could communicate, that the public may be enabled to view my character, in all its bearings, and in every light; and form an impartial judgment of my merits, and demerits, as a member of the state. And I have paused here, because I can prove that, previous to this period, my arrest was frequently in contemplation, which implied that, some parts of that conduct, were politically criminal, or, at least, deemed so to be.*

That my conduct, from the Summer assizes, 1797, until the time of my arrest, may be known, as well as that of the period, which I have detailed, I shall now recount every circumstance

* For the reasons of my mentioning the family of Stewart so frequently, and, in some measure, embodying a part of their political history with my own; see appendix, No. 3.

cumstance of it also, so far as would claim any public notice, or be supposed to implicate me in crime.

During the latter end of 1797, and Spring of 1798, I passed unnoticed, being mostly confined by bilious attacks, frequently accompanied with fever. Early in March, I set out for Scotland, to visit an uncle of Mrs. Dickson, who, as I was informed by express, was dangerously ill. His death, and the unsettled state in which he left his affairs, detained me there, till the month of April. On my return, my servant, who brought my luggage from Donaghadee, was stopped in the street of Portaferry, and carried to the guard-house. There, every thing was scrutinized with a minuteness, which excited the ridicule of the officers, who were obliged to perform the task. After every thing, in which dangerous concealments seemed likely to be contained, was tossed, shaken, and turned outside in, to no purpose, a large tobacco-box, which had formerly belonged to a sea-captain, and which I had brought from Scotland, as a curiosity, was eagerly laid hold of. As this box, supposed to be fraught with more evils than that of Pandora, was of steel, and had lain by, time immemorial, it was so rusted that the inquisitors could not force it open. In their hurry, they overlooked the cause of its obstinacy, and, attributing it to a concealed spring, were about

to demolish it, till captain Marshall, hereafter to be mentioned! having pointed out their error, saved it from destruction. The cause of all this was a first surmise, and, afterwards, an assertion, that my visit to a dying friend, in Scotland, was only a pretext, while my real business was to *form and promote united societies there, and a correspondence, between them and those of this country.* This being taken for granted, it might be naturally supposed that my common documents were concealed in my luggage, and my diploma in my tobacco-box.

Tho' my bilious complaints were nearly removed, by sea-sickness, change of air, and exercise, during my excursion, yet the symptoms returned soon afterwards; and I was advised, by a medical friend, not to resume my usual sedentary life, but to take exercise on horseback daily, and drink the Ballynahinch waters. The former part of this advice I immediately adopted; and, as the sacrament of the Lords supper was administered, in the month of May, not only in my congregation, but in others, where I assisted, the riding from place to place, and the services which I had to perform, afforded exercise in abundance; but, at the same time, prevented me going to Ballynahinch, as soon as I wished. In the third and fourth week of May, I spent several days in Newtown Ards, on sacramental duty; during which, I rode

rode twice into Belfast, and returned, on the morning following. As, about this time, the king's troops and insurgents had frequent engagements, in the counties of Wicklow and Wexford, the public mind was very much agitated, and the public ear occupied, by rumors, often as inconsistent and unfounded, as they were numerous and alarming. In Belfast, I had not only an opportunity of reading those contained in the public papers, but of hearing such as were communicated by private letters, or wafted by the breath of popular fame. These reports, I freely, and, as far as I could, correctly mentioned, in company, on my return to the house of Mr. Sinclair, Presbyterian minister, at Newtown Ards; not passing, without remarks, the extravagance of some, and the glaring inconsistency of others. Among these, I mentioned one, viz. "that a party of the black horse had gone over to the insurgents;" which, by the bye, was confidently asserted, and generally believed, for several days. The cause of my now recollecting this, more correctly than others, will soon appear, and, at the same time, shew, how eagerly cause of crimination against me was hunted for, and, on what slight pretences I might expect to be laid hold of.

On Tuesday morning, May 29th. I left Mr. Sinclair's with a view to spend the day at Crawford's-burn, the seat of John Crawford Esq.

and ride thence, to Belfast, in the evening. However meeting some gentlemen, on their way to Belfast, who told me that major Crawford was not at home, I accompanied them thither. Next day, I rode out to Ballygown house, the seat of Robert Rollo Reid Esq. where I spent the afternoon and night, that I might be convenient to Saintfield fair, in which I intended to buy a horse, next day. On Thursday, I paraded the fair, for several hours, and in the most public manner, but did not find a horse, such as I wished for. On mentioning my disappointment, to some gentlemen present, one of them said, that he knew a horse, such as I had described and that the proprietor wished to dispose of him, but that neither he nor the horse was in the fair. On learning that captain George Sinclair, of Belfast was the owner, I expressed a wish to have the horse sent to town, as I was obliged to be there, on the following morning. On this, a gentleman, having looked around shouted, "M'Ginn." M'Ginn immediately came forward, and being requested to call at captain Sinclair's, and order his servant to take the grey horse to town, next morning, as there would be a gentleman there to buy him, promised that he would.

This being settled, the day far spent, and my appetite keen, I went to, what was called the best Inn, (I believe, Elliot's) to get some refreshment.

ment. From the hurry and confusion of the place, I could not get a morsel, with any comfort. On this disappointment, I called at the house of a David Shaw, where I got some excellent cold beef, drank one tumbler of punch, and immediately left town, with an intention of returning to Belfast, without having entered a house in Saintfield, except the Inn, as above mentioned, and that of David Shaw; or spoken to an individual, except in the public fair.*

These circumstances, tho' seemingly trivial, will afterwards appear of some importance, from their relation to M'Ginn, as the message about the horse, is transformed, by John Hughes, into a message to him, then in Belfast, relative to my intended removal to Ballynahinch.

I mention

* I have mentioned the two nights, spent with Mr. Ried, as they were the fifth and sixth before my arrest, for several reasons. 1st. he had been my pupil, from his seventh to the end of his tenth year. 2dly. in consequence of this I had lived in perfect confidence with him whenever we met. 3dly. from these circumstances, I might be supposed to have unbosomed myself, to him, respecting my military command, &c. &c. especially, as fame had conferred on him the rank of Colonel. 4thly. on the latter of these evenings, he expressed great uneasiness, from the apprehension that *Mr. Cleland* would call, while I was with him. And 5thly. he was one of the reputed informers, after my arrest, and, on whose information, my conviction was deemed certain; as he had been obliged to flee the country in 1797 and permitted to return, thro' interest so *special*, that under the Influence of reviving loyalty, cherished by gratitude, his testimony was counted on, as a matter of course, and great things expected from it.

I mention them, also, for another reason. During the whole of my stay, in Saintfield, on that day, I was so faithfully attended, at humble distance, by a few gentlemen, that, whenever I looked round, they met my eye. I say "gentlemen," because one of them was possessed of a considerable landed property, and another a dignitary of the church; and, to all such, courtesy and custom allow that appellation.*

In the evening, instead of proceeding to Belfast, I stopped at Ballygurn, where I slept, that night also; and, next morning, set out for Belfast, on business, and in hope of seeing Capt. Sinclair and his horse; but, unfortunately, the Captain was not at home, and the horse was not sent to town. I suppose Mr. M'Ginn had mistaken his route, as well as the purport of his message.

On this disappointment, as the horse which I rode, was not only a slow traveller, but weak, I intended to go part of the way, that evening to Ballee, where, by appointment of Presbytery, I was to preach next day, and administer the sacrament

* Whatever ideas the *particular* attention of these gentlemen excited at the time, I have frequently reflected on it since, with equal pleasure, and gratitude, though not gratitude to *them*. It supplies a strong presumption, at least, that I was neither in improper company, nor improperly employed, on that occasion; whatever may have been surmised afterwards, on the authority of Mr. Hughes, who will be introduced in the sequel.

sacrament of the Lord's Supper, on the day following. However, as I was mounting, I was accosted by Mr. John Coulter, of Collon, who, on knowing my situation, pressed me to go home with him, and he would accommodate me with a horse, which would carry me to Ballee, in due time next morning, with ease and safety. I did so, and, setting out early in the morning, reached Downpatrick, twenty miles distant, before eleven o'Clock.*

On my arrival, a new circumstance occurred, which proved, with what avidity my inculpation was sought for, and with what eagerness every word of mine was laid hold of, by the minions at Newtown-Ards, which, even by implication, could possibly lead to it. Before I could enter the inn, at which I stopped, Captain Marshall, of the York Fencibles, whom I have already mentioned, came up to me, and, accompanying me into a room, told me, with affectionate agitation, that he had been at Portaferry, in my absence, with a message from Colonel Stapleton, to enquire on what authority I had said, at Mr. Sinclair's

* I hope this circumstance will be recollected, when the testimony of John Hughes shall be brought forward; as he is made to swear that I was to go to Mr. Pottinger's, not one mile from Belfast, on that day, and wait there till seven o'Clock in the evening, that he might have an opportunity of sending me the intelligence for which I had come to Belfast; which intelligence, he also swears that I communicated to *him* at the same time.

Sinclair's, on Monday, " that a party of the Black Horse had gone over to the insurgents." Let it not be forgotten that Colonel Stapleton was an entire stranger to me, and, *that he was then resident in Newtown Ards ! ! ! !*

I immediately gave Captain Marshall an account as before written, of that and other reports of the day, which I had repeated there, and begged that he might communicate it to Colonel Stapleton. He said, he had much rather I would write to the Colonel. I, therefore, got pen, ink, and paper, and wrote him, that I had repeated the " rumor of the Black Horse," and several others, at Mr. Sinclair's, on Monday, as the common reports of that morning in Belfast—that, if I had been there, two days afterwards, on my return from the same place, I could, and perhaps would, have repeated many more, which were in general circulation—and that I would not have thought myself blameable in so doing: but that, if any farther inquiry was deemed necessary, " *I would be found at Ballee, the two following days, and in Portaferry at night; and that, for some weeks afterwards, I would be found at Ballynahinch, from noon on Monday, until the same hour on Saturday, and, on the intermediate time, in Portaferry, on the road between the two places.*" This letter I read to Captain Marshall, sealed, put into his hand, and

and saw him deliver it to a dragoon, then mounted at the door, and waiting for his dispatches to the Colonel.

This done, I hurried off to Ballee, four miles distant, where I arrived in time to perform the service allotted me. Agreeable to what I had written to Colonel Stapleton, I went to Portaferry, in the evening. Next morning, I returned to Ballee, performed the duties of the day, and went back to Portaferry. On Monday, I attended again, at Ballee; and, after the service of the day, baptized a child for, and dined with, a Mr. John M'Neown, a very repectable farmer of that neighbourhood. After dinner, the conversation turned on "*the floggings*," "*shavings with red-hot iron*," and "*half*-hangings," which for some time had been practised in the country. "Very well," said one of the company, "if they do not proceed to whole-hanging." "Well, indeed;" said I, "for my part, from what I am experiencing, and the manner in which I am hunted, I am sure they will hang me if they can find any plausible pretext:" or words to that effect. This circumstance, I mention, only on account of the base use that was made of it, several years afterwards, by a reverend brother, as will appear in the sequel of this Narrative. And I beg it may be remembered that this conversation took place in presence of two clergymen, a wealthy linen-

draper, and a large company of respectable country-people, with one of whom I was not personally acquainted, *except the clergymen* and *linen-draper*.

A few minutes after this conversation, *the linen-draper*, a *Mr. James Brown*, and I mounted our horses, and travelled together until within a mile of Ballynahinch. Captain Magenis, of the Castlewellan yeomanry, and another gentleman were my companions, for that mile. When we parted, I drove to the inn, where I supped alone, and slept that night. Anxious to receive benefit, as soon as possible, I rode out to the well, at seven o'Clock, next morning, and drank the water; did the same at one; and a third time, at five in the evening. On my third trip, I felt happy in meeting Edward Smith, Esq.—a man of excellent character, *approved* loyalty, and an officer in his Majesty's revenue, with a sister, on their way to lodgings, which they had taken, for the season. Thither I accompanied them, and spent some time with them, devising means of getting accommodation in the same house; after which I returned direct to town.

As the hour of this return was the last of my liberty, *for three years, seven months, and seven days*, I quit it with regret. Let me therefore pause, and request my readers to review the occurrences of the last two months, as I have related

related them; and the relation of which, I challenge any man living to controvert. I believe, it has never been alleged that any plan of the Northern Insurrection was digested, previous to the month of March. As I was out of the kingdom, during the greater part of that and the month following, I could have no part in what was then done. Indeed, none of the informers, so far as I know, have brought any charges against me, during that period. The succeeding period, of less than six weeks, I have accounted for, almost to a day, and even that day no one of them has filled up, as might have been been supposed, from their accounts of themselves, by mentioning a single meeting with any *brother General* to concert a plan of operations; or with the *Colonels under my command*, to give them necessary instructions. Yet, I may have been a General, for aught that appears to the contrary; and I may not have been a General, though people said I was. But be that as it was, General, or no General, it appears from the cases of the "tobacco-box" and "Black Horse," as well as other circumstances, that my doom was pre-determined, though, contrary to expectation, it did not prove *fatal*. Perhaps, however, as Mr. Pollock said afterwards "had I been left to myself two days longer, it might have been otherwise."

It was on the evening of the 5th of June, that I returned, from my interview with Mr. Smith, to Ballynahinch. I had scarcely sitten down in my room, when a servant informed me, that a gentleman, in the street, requested to speak to me. On going out, I met Captain Magenis, already mentioned, in company with a Lieutenand Lindsay, of the same corps. We walked out of town, at the request of Colonel Magenis and, after much hesitation and embarrassment, he informed me, in great agitation, that there had been a meeting of yeomanry officers, that day, in Clough; and, that he had received a letter, from Colonel Lord Annesley, ordering him to detain me, as a prisoner, till he should receive farther instructions." I begged that he would be composed, for that I was perfectly easy, as I could bid defiance to malice itself, if unsupported by villainy, in respect to every part of my conduct. On asking him for his warrant, he told me that *he had only his Lordship's letter;* and that, *as I had a horse, I might take a ride.* This I declined, and asked him and Mr. Lindsay to accompany me to my room, as I had saddle-bags and papers there, which it might be proper for them to examine. This also they positively refused to do. I then told them, that I would retire, and requested them to place sentinels on the inn, lest they should be charged with neglect of duty. This also they refused, saying, that they supposed my detention was only a *whim of his Lordship.*

Lordship, and that I would be discharged in the morning. However, at my earnest request, they placed a serjeant in the house, a distant relation of the family, who took his rest, during the night, without giving himself, or me, any trouble. This politeness and confidence I mention with pleasure; and am sorry that I shall have so few instances of the kind to record, as having occurred during my confinement in Ireland.*

About noon, next day, a Colonel Bainbridge arrived in Ballynahinch, from Lisburn, gave orders for my transmission thither, and, *without seeing me*, proceeded to Montello, to call on lady dowager Moira. Being informed of this, I dispatched a messenger, after him, to request, that, as I was in a delicate state of health, and the weather intensely hot, I might be permitted to ride, or travel in a chaise. The answer I received was not only blunt, but cruel: "*A chaise, and be damned! Let him walk, or take a seat on the car, which goes to town with the old guns.*"

Irritated with this harshness, so different from the treatment, which I had experienced, on the preceding evening, I determined to walk, be the consequence as to my health, what it might. About four o'clock, in the afternoon, I set out with

* This confinement commenced in the fifth month of my 53d. year.

with a guard of 14 men, and a car loaded with old guns, over a very rough and hilly road of eight miles, under a scorching Sun, and enveloped in clouds of dust. We reached Lisburn, about eight in the evening. I need not say that I was exhausted, almost to faintness. The moment that I was refreshed by some wine and water, and a change of the flannels next my skin, I waited on General Goldie, who received me, with all the politeness of a gentleman and a soldier. On observing the exhausted state, in which I was, he expressed his sorrow that he could not accommodate me with a bed in his own lodgings, and told me that the place of confinement in Lisburn, was such that my passing a night in it might endanger my life; but, added, that I might take a carriage, in which he would send a discreet serjeant, with me, to Belfast, under an escort of two dragoons, and that he was sure General Nugent would immediately release me, "*as there was no charge, of any kind, against me;* a suspicion only existing that, as I had a general acquaintance in Scotland, spent a considerable time there, in Spring, and had been very much on horseback, since my return, I might have been promoting a connexion between the disaffected here, and people of the same description, in that country."

Gratified with the attention and openness of the General, and flattered with the prospect of

of immediate liberation, I ordered a chaise, and, my escort being ready, I hurried off to Belfast, little thinking that all my fairy prospects should so soon be blasted, and my expectations disappointed. On my arrival at the General's quarters, I sent in the Serjeant to receive his commands. Instead of liberation, these were to "carry me to the *black-hole*," then a guard-house and prison, "and there to deliver me into safe custody." He did not even deign to see me!

Having reached the *black-hole*, I was *politely* shewn in, and admitted *without much ceremony*. On admission, I there found Mr. Robert Hunter, a merchant of Down, who had been introduced a few minutes before, and was undergoing an examination, about arms found in his stores. In this all were so interested, that my entrance was little noticed, till some of the soldiers of the Monaghan militia, who were on guard, observing my exhausted situation, civilly offered me a seat, on a large platform, which served them for chairs, table, and bed. This offer I gladly embraced, as I was extremely fatigued. Mr. Hunter's examination being finished, I was asked some questions, my answers to which *secured me possession of my seat*, of which Mr. Hunter came and took part. I then inquired, where we were to be accommodated, during the night, and was answered, in a very rough tone,

tone, "you are to stay where you are." After some time, I asked, if I might be permitted to send for some refreshment. This, as we were told by a serjeant, no commissioned officer being present, was positively forbidden. However, on sending for the Captain of the guard, he came to us, and being told *my* situation* in particular, he kindly ordered that whatever we wanted, or might want, during the night, should be procured for us. His orders were obeyed; and we, having refreshed ourselves, asked if there was any spot, where we might enjoy a few hours rest; on which, one of the soldiers, civilly enough, offered us a part of their platform, on which we could stretch ourselves at length; and, as no better place could be procured, here we were obliged to lay ourselves down on hard boards, covered with filth and dust, without covering, and with my saddle-bags as our common pillow. To aggravate our feelings, we were nauseated with stench, and stunned with a continued torrent of ribaldry, oaths, and obscenity during great part of the night. Disgusting as this scene was, and painful

* The Captain of the guard was Robert Wallace, Esq. then an Officer in the Belfast yeomanry, and now a Major of Brigade. He is son to the late Joseph Wallace, Esq. whose memory will ever be revered by all who knew him. That his son inherits his mild and amiable virtues, I have no reason to doubt. That he may ever enjoy that inheritance, is my fervent wish.

painful to our feelings, to us these pains were only the beginning of sorrows.*

In the morning we had breakfast brought us, from Mr. Hunter's, after which we were detained, in this loathsome abode, till about two o'Clock in the afternoon, when we were removed to the Donegal Arms, then the Prevost prison. There, four others and I were thrust into a room, about sixteen feet by ten broad, without table, chair, or any other furniture, whatever; and, as our only window was unsecured, by iron bars or bolts, a chalked line was drawn across the floor, about six feet from it, and intimation given us, not to set a foot over said line, under pain of instant punishment. This left a space, of about ten feet square, in which, five people, accustomed, at least, to the comfortable conveniencies of life, some of them to its luxuries, were to take their exercise, eat, and sleep. Besides, as there was but one window in the room, we were obliged to have it kept open,

* That this charge may not lie against the Monaghan regiment, justice requires that its weight should be laid on one of their officers, by whom the scene complained of was acted, and patronized. His name, as I was informed, is Cross. Of the wretch I had no previous knowledge, nor do I recollect that I ever saw him afterwards, during my confinement. The vileness of his conduct delicacy will not allow me to mention. Let him recite it if he dare. Of the other officers, I must say, that their conduct, so far as I ever knew or heard, was equally becoming gentlemen and soldiers.

to prevent suffocation, as the weather was intensely hot; and, as the yard was covered with filth, and the offices a horse-barrack, we were annoyed day and night, with offensive smells, noise and uproar. Thus accommodated, we were allowed to send for beds to lie on, and clothes to cover us. We, therefore ordered two mattresses, having room for no more; but as they did not arrive till a *few minutes after four o'Clock;* which, as we were informed, was the latest hour of ingress to our prison, they were not permitted to be introduced. Hence we were obliged to lie, another night, on bare boards. They were clean, however, which rendered them preferable to those of the *black-hole.* In addition to all this, we were obliged to sit up, to be counted, on the exchange of sentinels, *which took place, every second hour.*

Hitherto, nothing like Insurrection, had taken place in Ulster. When we were treated, as above, previous to Insurrection, nothing, but increased severity, was to be expected, after its commencement. Indeed, we were scarcely assured of the fact, till we were made to feel its effects. The number of our sentinels was increased, their passions were irritated against us, and their language became so insolent and outrageous, that we considered our lives in imminent danger. After the affray at Antrim, we were particularly alarmed and harassed by the

the dragoons of the 22d. regiment, enraged, as they were, by the loss which they had sustained. As their barrack was in our rere, they had to pass our open window, in all their outgoings and incomings. Hence, our ears were dinned with their imprecations, oaths, and declarations to our sentinels, that, "were they so placed, they would not leave one of us alive." On more occasions than one, some of them got into the Prevost, made their way to the door of our apartment, and threw in dead fingers, thumbs, &c. &c. with loose gestures, and words, awfully expressive. On one occasion, an individual wrested a musket from one of our sentinels, levelled it successively at our heads, as we sat on the floor, and swore that, "if he had his will, for five minutes, he would do for us every man." Perhaps, he would then have done so, in the fury which agitated him, had not James Bell, Prevost serjeant, rushed forward, laid hold of the musket, and dragged him away. In justice to said Bell, whose office of executioner had not yet extinguished the feelings of the man, I add, that he immediately reported this outrage to the commanding officer, on which such orders were given, as prevented a repetition of the like afterwards.

Though we now thought that the situation, in which we were placed, could scarcely be rendered worse, we soon found ourselves miserably

serably mistaken. After the Insurrection took place in the county of Down, the number of prisoners was greatly increased, and they were generally huddled together, without regard to either age or station. Of these, many were destitute of the means of procuring a morsel of bread, or a wad of straw to spread over the boards on which they were obliged to lie; and, in the prevailing alarm and ferment, no attention was paid, for some weeks, either to their wants or their distresses, by the servants of government. In fact, they must have died of hunger, had they not been supported by their fellow-prisoners, and a number of families in Belfast, who generously supplied them with food, and other necessaries. This, in addition to the expenses of self-support, pressed very heavily on some among us, who, regardless of prudence, implicitly obeyed the calls of humanity. Besides, from the multitude of prisoners, the house was daily becoming dirty, and the air noxious; and, from the accumulated, and accumulating, filth in the yard, our open windows, instead of relief, only admitted air more offensive, and almost equally dangerous. Though some of these things were, unavoidable in our situation, yet others certainly afforded cause of complaint; and all of them were sources of sufferings, or danger, to us.

As

As the frequent change of sentinels, which I have already mentioned, and the circumstances attending it, nearly deprived us of sleep, the execution of a new order was equally unfavorable to our composure of mind. After the several battles, in the county of Down, though the Insurrection was quelled, alarm seemed to gain strength. In consequence, on each change of our guards, the soldiers were made to load with ball-cartridge, in our presence; and, ordered, if any new disturbance should arise, to put us every man to death. In justice, I here mention with pleasure, that not one officer, so far as I recollect, offered us an insult, on these occasions; and that few gave the orders, before mentioned, without evident symptoms of sensibility and regret.

Under the uneasiness, which these orders occasioned within, we were not free from anxiety about things without. We knew that trials had commenced, and that executions, spiking of heads, &c. &c. were taking place; but as our friends were denied admission to us, we owed all our circumstantial information to what we overheard among the soldiers, and the communications of the Prevost serjeant, who frequently visited us; and these were, generally made with marked emphasis, and accompanied with hints not very pleasing, to which his blood-

besprinkled

besprinkled trowsers, and, sometimes, hands stained with blood, gave the force of plainer language.

Before the commencement of these trials, resolutions of extending them seem to have been formed, and measures taken to procure information against individuals, who had been arrested before the Insurrection, of whom I was one. To attain this, it was deemed *expedient* to apprehend some of their least suspected dealers in information: denounce them, *as ringleaders in sedition, whose conviction was certain;* and, under this denunciation, place them among the victims devoted to death. This measure seems to have been adopted, in the hope, that compassion would be excited, among their fellow-prisoners, by the supposed certainty of their fate; and that, in the warmth of that compassion, confidential conversation might be brought about, in which something would be elicited, to confirm their information, and ensure the ruin of their devoted neighbours.

The first of these, of whom I had any knowledge, or by whom I was beset, was the *notorious* John Hughes—a man, some years before, of considerable respectability, but with whom I never had any particular connexion, or even intimate acquaintance. However, he was fixed on, as most likely to succeed in entrapping me

and

and a few others. With a view to this, opportunity was taken to excite our compassion, either on the day of, or after, his arrest. We were entertained with a fable truly affecting—"that there was no hope of saving his life—that his mind was deranged—that he was treated with great cruelty—and, that he was placed among a crowd of poor wretches, with whom he could neither have conversation, nor comfort." This pathetic fiction was immediately followed with an observation that, "if we could possibly make room for him, taking him to us would be an act of the greatest charity." Completely imposed on by the tale, we instantly yielded to the application, and, smothering though we were, received him into our *stove*. On his entrance, his looks and manner were wild, unsettled, and strongly marked with melancholy. Afterwards, he talked, in a desponding tone, of the certainty of his conviction, and sometimes of a secret conspiracy against him, in which, as appeared, he considered some of us as concerned. At other times, he would start, with seeming horror, and exclaim that the sentinel was about to shoot him. On the whole, though he sometimes talked soberly, and generally *listened attentively to our conversation*, he acted his part so well, at intervals, that during two nights, and the intermediate day, I was as fully convinced of his derangement, as I was of my own existence; and under this impression, not only

only prayed with him, and for him, in his seemingly composed moments, but was quite delighted with the *wonderful* comfort which *devotional exercises* seemed to give him. Some of our party, however, suspected him of imposture from the first; and their suspicion was soon confirmed, by his being removed, for some time every day, to a distant apartment, and detained in secret conference. His total removal from us, a few days afterwards, and his *symptoms of insanity* suddenly disappearing, certainty succeeded suspicion, and his name was consigned to infamy, together with those of his employers.

Besides Hughes, other informers were placed among us, about the same time. One of which was the Mr. Magin mentioned by him, in his deposition, which will appear afterwards. He, like the other, was committed, under the most dreadful denunciations of vengeance, and, as the other had done, expressed the most lively apprehensions of his impending fate, even with lamentations and tears. He made his way to me, frequently, and under various pretexts; sometimes to complain of his melancholy situation, sometimes to borrow trifles, and, at others, to affect confidential conversation, or ask advice. In one of these conversations, he expressed his wonder, how the *Earl of Londonderry*, *Nicholas Price, Esq.* and the *Rev. John Cleland* had

had been informed of every thing he had done, and all the meetings of united Irishmen, which he had attended. He then begged me, with a seeming earnestness, *to be on my guard against informers, for I had powerful and bitter enemies, as he very well knew.* "How do you know?" said I. After some hesitation, he told me that "tempting offers had been made to himself, to induce him to become informer against me." Something, in his manner, on this occasion, impressed me, with the suspicion, not only that he might be an informer, but a *delegated successor of Hughes*, for the purpose of eliciting matter of information.

This suspicion was fully justified, soon after, in an interview, which I had with a Mr. Pollock; not the once celebrated *Owen Roe O'Neill* Pollock—but a Mr. Pollock, whom I had known, many years before, as an attorney, not higher than the second class. This gentleman, as appeared, was sent to Belfast to forward and conduct such trials, before courts martial, as he might think expedient to bring on. Anxious to see some of the objects of his mission, and as he gave me reason to suppose, *me* in particular, he visited us, on the very night of his arrival, and in a style which surprised us. At a late hour, just as we, *poor prisoners*, had laid ourselves down to rest, but not to sleep, our ears were arrested by a voice, not very articulate

or musical, bellowing execrations against "the d——d infernal Traitor;" and frothing out, "where is the scoundrel Dickson?" On looking up, I saw a figure, not very gainly or dignified, with the appearance of a gentleman under each arm, lighted towards me by a sentinel. He seemed rather unsteady in his gait: but whether the oscillation was in him, or in my drowsy eyes, I shall not pretend to determine. His language to me, during the few minutes which he was allowed to stay, I shall not repeat. That I leave to Mr. Pollock, if he can, or chooses to, recollect it. I shall only say that either from regard to him, to me, to both, or to our common nature, the gentlemen turned him round and carried him off, raging as he was, and swearing, that "he would hang the Traitor next day."

On that next day, or the day following, I was summoned, by a guard, to wait on Mr. Pollock. I instantly obeyed, and was conducted to his apartments, in the house of Mr. M'Cluncy, surgeon, nearly opposite to our prison. My entrance seemed to discompose him very much; but I was soon led to think that he had partly discomposed himself, before my arrival. The Rev. John Cleland was sitting with him, when I entered, and staid in the room, for some time. After a few questions and remarks, respecting *Traitors*, *Treason*, &c. put and made in Mr. Pollock's

Pollock's *peculiar* manner, he asked me, if I knew "*Mr. Grattan*," as he afterwards asserted, but, as I then thought, and still think, "*Mr. Curran.*" In consequence, I answered that I did; which led to the following conversation: "You have often met him, I suppose?" "Not often, but always with great pleasure." "I suppose you correspond?" "Sometimes we have correspondence." "And, pray Sir, what have been the subjects of your correspondence? Irish politics, no doubt?" "We have corresponded on more subjects than one, but seldom on politics. I will shew you a specimen of our correspondence, if you desire it." This desire he expressed with eagerness; on which I handed him a letter, from Mr. Curran, which I happened to have in my pocket. This he hurried over, with devouring eyes, till he came to the subscription, when he exclaimed, in rage; "Z—ds. This is not from Grattan." "Grattan!" cried I, "No, surely! It was Mr. Curran you asked about." "No, by H——ns; I need not ask about him. I know, you and he were never asunder at the assizes of last year—You were d——d busy there packing juries, and tampering with the sheriff, to save Traitors from the gallows—It was Grattan I mentioned." "Be assured then," said I, "I never saw Mr. Grattan, in my life; nor ever had any correspondence with him, of any kind; and, as to packing juries, I hope you do not mean to wound this

gentleman, (looking towards Mr. Cleland) through my sides."—Mr. Cleland got up, and walked off, without even making his bow; and Mr. Pollock, as if recollecting himself, became calm, and seemed uneasy; I suppose, from having made a greater blunder here, than between the names "*Grattan*" and "*Curran;*" as the array had been twice challenged, at the Down assizes in 1797, on the alleged ground, that Mr. Cleland had given a partial pannel to the sheriff. Be this as it may, to this blunder I probably owed my dismissal, for a season, and return to my prison, in charge of the guard, which had conducted me to Mr. Pollock. Be it noted, however, that I was not dismissed, without the friendly assurance that, "if I did not do *what government expected,* I would certainly be hanged—By the E———l G—d, I would."

This last sentence conveyed the ideas, that Mr. Pollock either had what he deemed sufficient evidence for my conviction, or was sure of procuring it; and that I might expect another interview with him, for some purpose or other. The former gave me little uneasiness; the latter was painful, principally, from the disgust excited by the insolence and vulgarity which I had experienced from the *little great* man.

While

While I was, in my own mind, anticipating this interview, on the same evening, I was interrupted by the entrance of a decent-looking countryman. As he was an entire stranger, I asked his business. He said, it was only to speak a few words with me in private. On my retiring with him, to a corner of the room, he told me, that he lived near Saintfield—that he had called on his neighbour, Nicholas Magin—and that Magin had told him of the information he had given against several people, and me, in particular—That, in the detail of information against me, he mentioned my being at the fairs of Killinchy and Saintfield, in the month of May—that, on this, he asked Magin what information he could give about Killinchy fair, as he was at home, *a'l that day*, getting his barley sown." Here, I interrupted my informant, by asking how, and what he knew about the barley. He answered, that "Magin's barley ground was a bog-field—that if rain should come before it was sown, he was in danger of losing the benefit of the season—that, to prevent this, as the weather was then dry, he had got some neighbours to assist him—and, that he himself was with him from morning till night." He told me many other particulars; among others that Magin said, "he had given his information, on positive assurance that *he would not be brought forward to prosecute;*

and

and that, at any rate, it could take no lives, as a *great part of it was made up, to gain credit, and save himself.*"*

Of the truth of this intelligence, in part, I had satisfactory proof, in my second interview with Mr. Pollock, a very few days after. On entering his audience chamber, instead of a supernatural floridity of countenance and wandering eyes, I thought I perceived something like settled malignity, as well as chagrin, in his looks. This idea was not removed by the language and tone in which he addressed me. "You know, Sir" said he, with a ferocious air, "what government expects from you; and, if you do not comply, by G—d I will hang you, before 12 o'Clock to-morrow." This, I alleged, was yet impossible, as he would not venture on such a step without some sort of trial; which, I was sure, his *then* master would not dare to grant me; though it was what I most ardently

* Let this declaration be taken in connexion with those of the *celebrated* Newell and Bird, Agents and Correspondents of Lord Castlereagh, as published by themselves, and its truth will not be doubted. The latter charges all the villainies he committed to such assurance; and the former, not only does the same, but declares from the bed of sickness, and, with the fear of death before his eyes, that he made out his deadly list, as the price of his pardon, to impose upon Lord Camden and the Irish government, to whom he was introduced by Lord Castlereagh, on the recommendation of Mr. Edward Cooke, hereafter to be mentioned.

ardently wished and intreated, and what I challenged him to institute. Whether provoked by the suggestion that he had a master, or from what other cause, I know not; but, for a moment, he seemed half-choaked by a paroxysm of rage; and, on recovering breath sufficient, exclaimed: "You are d——d confident.—By ———— I have information against you, sufficient to hang *twenty* men." Then, setting his arms a kimbo, and affecting to look uncommonly big, he said, in the most insulting manner: "Pray, do you know a Nicholas Magin, Sir? I suppose you never met him, at any committees, or other seditious meetings?" To this I answered, with all the composure of countenance, which I could command, that, "I did know a Magin, but not that his name was Nicholas, till I saw him in prison; and that I never had been in his company, to my knowledge, at any meeting seditious, or not seditious, previous to his confinement." On this, he threw open a large book, which lay before him, in which the corners of many leaves were turned down; after inspecting which, he mentioned several places, and days, and demanded to know, whether I had not, there and then, attended seditious meetings. To this I answered, that, in some of these places, I had not been for several years, and that I had never attended *any* meeting of *any* kind, at *any* time, in *any* one of them—But that I had certainly

been

been in Killinchy and Saintfield, on the days specified by him; and that Magin was sent, from the latter place, with a message about a horse: as I have before related. The sound of the word "HORSE" seemed, for a moment, very much to affect him. But, recovering, he exclaimed: "a horse! a horse! What the Devil sort of a horse." "A horse" answered I, "able to carry my weight safely, either on the road, or across the country." "Ay! Ay!" replied he, "a charger for *a General*, I suppose! Now, pray, Sir, will you presume to say that you did not receive your commission, as a Rebel General, at Killinchy, in presence of Magin?" To this I answered, that "whether I did, or did not, receive such commission, it could not be in presence of Magin, as he was not in Killinchy on that day, or within several miles of it. He was at home sowing barley, and several of his neighbours were assisting him, from morning till night." After strutting, once or twice, across the room, he once more inspected his book, then swore, in great agitation, (half aside) "that cannot be." Seeing him thus agitated, I told him coolly, "that it was so;" and begged him to send for Magin; and, "if he did not acknowledge the fact, on allowing me twenty-four hours, I would prove it to his face." On his declining this, I added, "if you will give me a memorandum of the places and times you have mentioned, I will expose

Magin's

Magin's villainy, in more instances than this, that government may see how they are imposed on by such scoundrels, and cease, from their severities, and irritation of the public mind, by acting on his information." This he passionately refused, swearing, "that he saw through my flimsy pretexts—that he knew *us all*, too well, to be taken in by such subterfuges—that we, *Presbyterian Ministers*, were a set of d——d ungrateful scoundrels—that, though supported by government, we were, to a man, Rebels, and fomenters of Rebellion, while we thought ourselves safe; but that, on the approach of danger, we abandoned the people, whom we had seduced, and skulked like cowards." Having proceeded thus far, he paused, seemingly out of breath, and then added, but not with an approving smile, "By ——— you were not of the number—you were taken at your post, but rather too soon.—Had you been left to yourself a few days longer, by the ——— -—, government would have been sure of you."

However I might have relished this rough compliment to my own consistency and courage, I retorted the attack on my Rev. Fathers and Brethren, with pointed personality, and in such manner, as provoked his fury beyond all bounds. He raged, damned my impudence, swore that he was a man of fortune and a gentleman; and that, if I would dare to utter another

word, he would put me in irons. In his fury, he rushed out of the room, as I thought, to have his threat put into execution. However, I was mistaken. In a few minutes, he returned, told me to begone, and ordered the guard to take care of me, and deliver me where they had found me.

Thus was I, once more, relieved from the insults and outrage of this death-boding vulture; but not from his attempts to have me convicted of crime, that he might consign me to destruction. Magin was soon after sent for, told what I had asserted, and asked, "whether he could personally prove his information against me." He said: "*he could not*, but that he had it from different people, whose authority he could not doubt." "Can you produce them, you scoundrel?" was the next question. "No, Sir, they were all concerned in the Rebellion, and have made their escape." On this, Mr. Pollock's rage was turned on Magin, and his denunciations against him terrified the wretch, almost to death.

This I was told by the same man, to whom I was indebted for my former information concerning Magin, and whose veracity I had no reason to doubt. And, a very few days convinced me that Magin was sent to our prison, principally, if not entirely, in hope of procuring something,

something, which might lead to my conviction, as he was released unconditionally soon after this, and sent forth anew, to exercise his talents in the country at large.

I have, also, to observe, that every prisoner, of my acquaintance, who was called before Mr. Pollock, informed me, that they were examined, as I had been, *not on oath*, but under denunciations of being hanged; and that more questions were asked about their knowledge of, and connexion with, me, than about any other person, action, or event, whatever. These things plainly shew that, in a conversation with Magin, which I have related, he was *guilty* of, at least, one truth, viz. "*that I had bitter enemies.*"

One instance of this occurred, at this time, so wildly extravagant, and truly ridiculous, that I deem it not unworthy of notice. A young gentleman of the county of Down, of truly antient and noble family, had been arrested, sent to prison, and unfortunately placed near me. His character was so good, and the suspicion, on which he was committed, so slight, that application, for his release, was made to Mr. Pollock, by several gentlemen of his neighbourhood. On their representation, Mr. Pollock seemed disposed to liberate him, and he was sent for. However, he was asked, as others had been, "whether he knew *me*." On

his answering, " that he had been in my company during part of his confinement; Mr. Pollock exclaimed; " if you have any connexion with him, by ——, I can do nothing for you; his breath is poison, his tongue damnation, and his bosom Hell:" or in words to that purpose. But, on being satisfied, afterwards, that this connexion *with me*, was not voluntary, Mr. Pollock was mitigated, and the gentleman restored to liberty, and to his friends.

Besides these proceedings, in Belfast, and even within the walls of my prison, my confinement was embittered, by the situation to which my family was reduced, and the knowledge that every art, and every influence, was employed, through the lower part of the county of Down, to procure the information against me, so ardently wished for. The exertions of these were so numerous, and the zeal, with which they were prosecuted, so great, that their failure was perfectly astonishing, considering the terror of the moment, the inducements holden out, and the villainies to which they gave rise.

Of these I shall mention only one; and that one, as it will require some detail, merely on account of the meanness, falsehood, and cruelty, which it displayed.

On

On the commencement of the Insurrection, in the county of Down, the people of Ardes made an attack on the town of Portaferry, in which seven lives were lost. On the day after, Mrs. Dickson, not thinking herself and children safe, applied to Capt. Matthews, of Innishargie, Commander of the yeomanry, for a protection. He candidly told her that he could not ensure her protection, *against a set of ruffians;* but would give her a passport to Donaghadee. On receipt of this she had two common wheel-cars prepared for herself and family; but, such was the prevailing terror, that her own servant durst not venture to drive them; nor could she procure a man, for any money, to hazard the undertaking. Hence, she was obliged to trust herself and daughters to the conduct of our second son, then about fifteen years of age; our eldest son *being then*, and *having been for some years before, serving his Majesty, as a Surgeon in the Navy.* Having reached Donaghadee, next day, after many interruptions by bodies of Insurgents, she dispatched the child back to Portaferry, concluding, from his youth, that he would not be disturbed. However, a body of Insurgents stopped him on the road, took possession of the horses and cars, carried him to Innishargie, the seat of Capt. Matthews before mentioned, and thence to Newtown Ards. On the second night, he made his escape, and returned to Portaferry: where, innocently relating

lating his adventure, he was arrested at the instance of a ruffian, confined for two days, and then transmitted to Downpatrick. There, he was kept, for more than a fortnight, in the gaol yard, exposed to a burning Sun by day, and the dews by night, with a wad of straw for his bed, and a great coat his only covering; and, for several days, destitute of meat and drink, except what was supplied by the humanity of common soldiers. At length, he was called before the Earl Annesley and a number of Magistrates and military Officers, who daily met in Downpatrick, by whom he was strictly examined. Every question concerning himself he answered, as I was assured, with the simplicity of a child, and coolness of a man. But, on being asked concerning the leaders of the Insurgents who took him to Innishargie, &c. he positively refused to answer any question, except what related directly to himself. This refusal gave occasion to the display of meanness, falsehood, and cruelty, to which I have alluded. It was in such words as these, "Hark ye, my lad, *you need not be afraid to tell all you know of the business—you cannot hurt your father now—he was hanged in Belfast yesterday.*"

Luckily, Colonel Stapleton before mentioned, was present, to whom Mrs. Dickson had written a circumstantial account of the child's being stopped by the Insurgents, after leaving her in Donaghadee;

Donaghadee; the horses being taken from him; and all that followed. He interfered with warmth; declared that "the boy," as he firmly believed, "had told the truth honestly," and then, turning to him said: "Don't be alarmed, my child--you have nothing to fear—your father is alive and well." This put an end to farther inquiry; and, he had my son sent to Portaferry, on his own parole, to *procure securities for his future good behaviour;* which he did, returned next day, and was liberated in form.

While thus shut up in a prison, harassed in person, and persecuted through my family, my little property did not escape. A dozen of nice sheep, and a very fine cow fit for the knife, fell victims to the maw of yeomen, and the crew of a Revenue Cutter then in the river; and two valuable milch-cows, with a good horse, a mare, and filley, went into different hands, on a general division of plunder. Of these, however, only one milch cow was finally retained. The horse and mare were afterwards returned, but so completely reduced, and mangled with wounds, that they were sold for less than one sixth of their value, when taken. To the honor of two *very poor yeomen*, whose anxiety to get my filley and favorite cow, was much remarked at the time. I must add, that they kept them with care, till the country became quiet, and then brought them back, in safety, to my daughter.

daughter. In justice, I must also say that my offices and yard were not severely plundered, and that my house was left uninjured, though locked up without an inhabitant, for some days, while fire and pillage were raging all around.*

Long as the preceding detail may appear, it comprehends occurrences, only of a few weeks; and these occurrences are only a part of what exposed me, and many others, to uneasiness of body, and distress of mind. Among others, sickness, latterly, began to appear; and the air of the yard was become so noisome, from the overflow of excrement, with which it teemed, and the removal of which was inhumanly neglected, that not only apprehensions, but symptoms, of fever became general and alarming.

From these apprehensions, the nuisances which gave them birth, and several other disagreeable

* The sparing my house, was owing to the military, who *could not be* induced, either to plunder or burn it, though furiously *incited by* the *gentleman*, at whose instigation my son had been arrested. This *gentleman* was a Surveyor of Excise, who denominated himself, in writing, "Edward Trotter Savage." Why he assumed the name of "*Savage*" could not be accounted for, but by the supposition that on calculating his nativity, some far-sighted gossip had seen into his future character. His father's name was not *Savage*; and even his mother could not, as was said, give him that of his father, with any certainty, unless she had been a *Ventriloguist*.

greeable circumstances, I, with eleven others, was partly relieved, early in July, by a removal to the artillery barrack. On our arrival there, we were put into two apartments, six and six; both of which were clean and comfortable, compared with those we had left. That of my mess was a neat clean little parlour, containing a settee, table, and a few chairs; and affording space for three mattresses, at night. Here, we were not plagued with the intrusion of nocturnal visitants, or any other avoidable disturbance. Servants were freely admitted with our breakfast and dinner. And our friends found less difficulty of admission to us. In addition to these relaxations, we were allowed, at certain hours, every day, to walk in a small yard, which was kept tolerably clean: and an artillery-man was permitted to serve us, for pay, by whom we had our room, clothes, &c. kept clean; and, what was an indulgence, little expected, but far more important to us, our errands run, and messages carried to and from our friends in town. Here I add, with pleasure, that Mr. Fox, town-major, under whose roof and whose eye, we now were, never interrupted our comforts, or restrained our indulgences by any impertinent intrusion. He did not indeed, hold any intercourse with us, but what his duty required, nor did we wish he should; but, in the discharge of his duty, so far as I know, he acted with propriety to us, and honor to himself.

On the whole, I must say, had all *my* treatment, while a prisoner in Ireland, been such as I experienced here, a considerable part of this Narrative would have been happily unnecessary. However, this relaxation of severity, and enjoyment of comparative comfort, were of short duration, as a painful reverse of situation soon followed.

Before I enter on an account of this reverse, and its consequents, I shall mention a circumstance, or two, which took place, during my residence in the artillery barracks, as they may afterwards appear of some importance. And,

First, so far as I recollect, it was immediately before, or soon after, our removal thither, that the attention of government, or rather those who acted under it, or assumed its powers, was first directed to the wants and distresses of the prisoners in Belfast; and TWELVE PENCE IRISH, per day, allowed for their subsistence. From the liberal sums allowed the state-prisoners in Dublin, to whom we proudly presumed that government thought us, *every way*, equal: and the recollection that one of us, at least, had there enjoyed that allowance, in the preceding year, the beggarliness of this pittance wounded our pride, and nearly produced its rejection. This, however, was prevented by the suggestion that,

that, if we rejected it, a Mr. Salmon and the Prevost-serjeant, by whom it was to be distributed, would put it into their own pockets; that, for this reason, we ought to accept it; and, if we did not choose to apply it to our own use, we might dispose of it for the relief of those, whose confinement was embittered by poverty and disease. On this suggestion, we unanimously agreed to receive—and *did* receive it.

How inadequate this was to the subsistence of those, who were, not only poor, but far removed from every friend and relative, must be very obvious. And that, to those, who had been accustomed, at least, to the conveniencies and comforts of life, it was a direct insult, must be equally plain. Yet, this same TWELVE PENCE IRISH, per day, was the only allowance, *in money*, granted to the state-prisoners in Ulster, so far as I know, or have ever heard, during the years 1798 and 1799.

Secondly. In the latter end of July, or very early in August, we were officially informed of a compact between government and the state-prisoners in Dublin, by which it was stipulated "that said prisoners, on giving certain information therein specified, should be allowed to emigrate to such country as should be agreed upon between them and government, giving

 security

security not to return to this country without the permission of government, and not to pass into an enemy's country, if on their so doing they should be freed from prosecution; and that the benefit of said compact would be extended to such persons in custody, or not in custody, as might choose to accept it."

Such confidence in government then continued, that this intelligence was received, with gladness, by most of the prisoners in Belfast; and a paper, acceding to the terms proposed, was numerously signed, and sent to Mr. Pollock. This paper he rejected, as he said, on account of informality or incorrectness; and sent one, written by himself, for the acceptance of which, by government, he pledged his HONOR to all who would sign it. On this pledge, the paper was signed by a great majority of the prisoners, in the Prevost-prison; but on being presented in the artillery barrack, by Colonel Barber, some hesitated, and I peremptorily refused, to sign it, declaring that "*I had no compromise to make with government; and that I would not sign any paper, either implying that I was guilty of crimes which I had not committed, or admitting any thing, as a crime, which I had done as a duty.*" To prevent misrepresentation, I delivered this declaration, *in writing*, to Colonel Barber, to be by him given to Mr. Pollock.

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On the receipt of this declaration, Mr. Pollock was said, to become so enraged, that he committed the paper with its signatures to the flames. However, he called on us, personally, a few days afterwards, accompanied by the Colonel and some other Officers, presented another paper to us, not in a body, but *one* by *one*, and demanded our determination. His interview with me was very short; and our conversation embraced only the question; "will you now sign the compact with government?" and my answer; which was merely a repetition of my former declaration through Col. Barber. After this, I was waited on by William Sinclair, Esq. his brother-in-law, a man whom I sincerely esteemed, and whose memory I revere. He expressed deep sorrow, for my having so greatly *offended Mr. Pollock*, and used many arguments to induce me to sign the paper, not only for my own sake, but that of my fellow-prisoners, *as my perseverance in refusal might be made a pretext for withholding from them the offered boon.* This last suggestion impressed me with the idea that all this pressing was not well-intended; as, if government meant to grant the proposed indulgence, the want of my signature, could be no reason for denying it to others; and, under this impression, I persisted in my refusal.

That this obstinacy, as it was called, was a disappointment to Mr. Pollock, and, perhaps,

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to others, I had very great reason to believe; nor did the belief give me any uneasiness. But the offence taken by some of my respected fellow-prisoners, on the supposition that my stubbornness was the cause, not only of preventing their emigration, but of their detention in prison, I painfully felt, and bitterly regretted, as my feelings and convictions were invincibly opposed to their wishes. However, the event proved, about four years afterwards, that their suppositions and conclusions had not even the substantiality of a shadow to support them. The probability is that, had the signatures in Belfast been accepted and retained, the persons who signed would, after pining under a long confinement, have been transported to the Continent of Europe, in common with the fourteen who had signed in Dublin, to work, or beg, their way, through foreign lands, till the grave, or some hospitable country, should yield them rest and shelter.*

Be this as it may, we twelve, comparatively comfortable *bondmen*, were soon after destined to another change of situation. Whether this change originated from the desire of varying and multiplying our miseries, or our comforts, I shall

* The reasons, on which this probability rests, will appear afterwards. As to the importance given to my signature, I am at a loss what to say, only that it was given. *What I know* of the matter shall be communicated in Appendix, No. 4.

shall not pretend to determine; but destined we were, and removed accordingly, to enjoy the summer-breeze on the surface of the water.

Of such removal this was not the first instance. Soon after the Insurrection, one prison ship had been stationed in the Pool of Garmoyle, three miles from Belfast, and completely stowed, as the prisons in town could not contain the multitudes dragged in, from the counties of Down, Antrim, Armagh, Derry, and Tyrone. This being found insufficient, a second, and of much larger burthen, was chartered, stationed in the same Pool, and nearly filled, both between decks, and in the lower hold, early in August. To occupy the vacant space on board, *if such could be said to exist*, was our destination. Accordingly, on the forenoon of the 12th of August, *the fair-day in Belfast*, we received notice to prepare for being carried "down the water." We had barely time to pack up our little luggage, before the guards appeared at the barrack gate; and there was neither car, nor other conveyance of any kind, even for our mattresses; so that we must have lain on *bare boards*, once more; had it not been for the exertions of our friends, who crowded round us, in alarm and agitation.

When marched to the street, we were astonished at the parade of horse and foot, ready

to take charge of us, and the affectation of alarm, *lest we should escape, or be rescued;* though to a suspicious mind, this day of crowd and confusion might seem to have been chosen with a view to encourage such an attempt. The countenances and conduct of the military, and the multitude, with which not only the street, but every door and window, was crowded, presented a curious contrast. The former, by every look and gesture, excited alarm and terror; the latter called forth feelings widely different, by starting tears, indignant frowns, and solemn silence. On reaching the quay, we found boats in waiting, embarked safely, and soon reached our floating Bastile. There, a guard was drawn up, on deck, to receive us; and, on approaching the hatch-way, we found it surrounded with a barricado of plank, from three to four feet high, from the top of which, on the inside, was hung a piece of old shrouds, to supply the place of a ladder, but not even fastened to the deck below, to keep it steady. This rendered ascent and descent, both difficult and dangerous. Indeed, for a considerable time some of us—I in particular—could neither go up, nor down without assistance.

When we first came close to the hatch-way, we were met by a *hot fœtid steam,* from the multitude below, almost intolerable. Through it, however, we were obliged to descend; and, on

on reaching the deck, found it literally crowded, so that there was some difficulty in clearing a corner for *us*. This done, we had time to contemplate our situation, which was truly unpromising. The length and breadth of our apartment I cannot exactly state; but it was only four feet eight inches high, so that we could neither walk, nor stand, upright: and, such was the number of its inhabitants that, when we laid ourselves down to rest, those on the deck were, not only in contact with each other,* but nearly so with a range of hammocks stretched over them, many of which were likewise occupied: whilst all the *good* air, admitted or admissible, was through four ballast-ports, two on each side of the ship. Our mattresses, which luckily arrived soon after us, we were obliged to use, both as beds by night, and seats by day, during our stay on board. In this respect, however, we were comfortable, compared with the multitude, many of whom had not even a wad of straw between them and the hard planks, when either sitting or lying. From the poverty of such, and seclusion from their friends, cleanliness was impossible, as they were under the necessity of wearing their linen, such as it was, without washing, *even for weeks*.

* On the lower deck, we were not only in contact, when stretched out; but many were obliged to lie, in opposite directions, with their limbs intermingled, the feet of the one range reaching to the knees of the other.

This alarmed us with apprehension,* both of disease and vermin, as the weather continued extremely hot. To this apprehension some other circumstances greatly contributed. Most of the prisoners were allowed to go on deck, only once a day, and for a short time—and the hatch-way was covered with a frame, and secured, at eight o'Clock every evening; previous to which a large vessel was let down, which, before morning, was grossly offensive, being nearly filled with excrement of every kind.

To counteract these circumstances. Necessity compelled us to use every mean, and make every exertion, which our situation would admit. Such of us, as had beds, *of any kind*, procured leave to carry them up frequently, and have them exposed to the Sun and air, on spars, or the nettings of the ship. We were allowed also to go on deck, in small parties, to take up water in buckets, and hand it to our companions below, who washed, and swabbed the deck and sides, three or four times a week. These labors, though very severe, as some of us were advanced in years, some infirm, and others totally unaccustomed to such drudgery, we all performed in

* Our cause of apprehension was great indeed. While walking on the quarter deck, we saw the poor wretches who got on deck, only once a day, busily employing the short time allowed them, in picking the vermin from their inside clothes, or shaking them from their rags over the ship's sides.

in turn; and I am fully convinced that they greatly conduced to the preservation of what health and strength we still enjoyed.

It is but justice to add here, that a Captain Steel, who had charge of the prisoners, did us great service, by suspending canvass tubes, from the rigging of the ship, which descended, not only between decks, but into the lower hold, and carried off a part of the pestilential air. To Mr. Richard M'Clelland, Surgeon and Druggist in Belfast, the prisoners were under very great obligations. Through his interest, he procured an order for supplying them with medicines, in consequence of a representation by me; which he did, in a manner, equally honorable to himself, and beneficial to them. This I can assert, as the care of the sick, and administration of their medicine, fell mostly to my lot, the Surgeon appointed having it in his power to visit us, very—very seldom. Such were the effects of these precautions, labors, and aids, under the auspices of providence, that, though many among us were occasionally sick, not one died on board.

To this account of our accommodation as to bed, &c. &c. that of our *board* I shall now subjoin, as our BLACK shilling per day, was withdrawn and our provisions supplied by government. In the distribution of these, there

was no *partiality* or *respect to persons*. We were allowed to form ourselves into separate messes; and the œconomy of our *ship-hold* was, as follows. About eight o'Clock in the morning, each mess was presented with *stirabout*, made of oaten-meal and water, and a jug or can of small-beer. This *stirabout* was prepared in a large boiler, by a wretch as dirty-looking as ever met the eye of mortal, and served to us in *coarse wooden tubs hooped with iron*. I need hardly add that, from the heat of the weather, and other causes, the small-beer was, generally, sour or vapid. These tubs, washed or unwashed, as the prisoners chose to send them back, were returned about one o'Clock, with boiled fresh beef, or salt pork, the very coarsest ship bread, and small-beer as at breakfast; but without vegetables of any kind, or *even a potatoe*. This was our *only provision*, and the *invariable fare of every day*. This fare, however, was supplied in abundance. At least, I never heard any complaint of the contrary. But the quality of the pork was frequently and loudly complained of. On some occasions, the prisoners threw it out of the port-holes, saying, it stunk so abominably that they could not bear it. This last circumstance I mention on the authority of others, and of my own sense of smell, as the mess, to which I belonged, used very little of the government provisions, except beef, and small beer when drinkable. It is true, we took our allowance

allowance of bread, &c.; but, it is equally true, that we handed it over to the poorer prisoners, who contrived to get it exchanged for butter, and such other little comforts as their friends could occasionally get sent on board. Besides, as we laid in our own provisions, beef excepted, and our own drinkables of every kind —and, as our friends supplied us, superabundantly, with garden-stuffs, sallading, fruit, fresh butter &c. we had it in our power, not only to supply invalids with many articles of useful regimen ; but to enable others, with the addition of their ship-bread, to procure comfortable broths occasionally.*

Notwithstanding all these attentions, the state of many among us continued truly pitiable, and our own situation was painful and dangerous. We were, at once, suffering severely in our minds, our persons, and our purses. It is true, our minds were occasionably relieved by the visits of some friends and relatives, who procured admission to us : But this was greatly diminished by the inconvenience and hardships to which these visits exposed them ; and still more

* Let it be here observed, that the prisoners were not supplied, by government, with bowl, dish, plate, mug, noggin, knife, fork, or spoon. Their only food utensils were the tubs and cans already mentioned, except what they could purchase for themselves. Hence many had to tear their food asunder like wild beasts, or wait till their neighbours were satisfied, before they could appease their hunger.

more by the continued mission of wretches among us, *under pretext of punishment*, to betray the ignorant and unwary, irritated as they then were, into unguarded expressions, and afterwards distort them into treason, for their destruction. This practice, though regularly persevered in, totally failed of success. Numerous as the prisoners were, not a sentence was elicited, or even forged, on which charge could be founded, or trial instituted. On the contrary, the only wretch, who made such attempt, by a forgery against two of our number (a Dr. Nixon, and the Rev. John Smith, Presbyterian minister of Kilrea) bungled the business so completely, that he narrowly escaped a flogging, and was disgracefully dismissed, *as unfit for service.*

Towards the end of September, our situation became less distressing. The heats had abated. We had gotten the port-hole in our quarter glazed, to keep out the spray, when it blew hard; and procured a small table, with a few folding stools. Several of the poorer prisoners, from whom information against their superiors had been vainly expected; others, equally poor who had been committed on unsupported charges, and some invalids, had been sent on shore. Hence, we had more room, less disturbance, and a better air. We had also gotten a canvas curtain put up, to draw round us occasionally, and afford us a kind of privacy. This last circumstance gave us occasion to observe how

how quicksighted the people are to every affectation of seclusion from, or elevation above, them. From the time this curtain was erected, we were denominated " the court," and our corner " the castle." Thus *good-humouredly* distinguished, and apprehending that we were in no danger of a sudden dispossession by the superior forces of a greater castle, as our lives which alone they had hitherto aimed at, had proved *uncomeatable*, we began to amuse ourselves with farther plans of fortification against the attacks of the approaching Winter—the most formidable enemy, as we vainly imagined, which we had then to fear.

Here, however, we were mistaken, as usual, and all our plans proved visionary. On the arrival of Sir John Borlase Warren, in Carrickfergus road, with his squadron, and the French ships, taken off the N. W. coast of Ireland, my messmates and I were hurried into a boat, *without a moment's previous notice*, carried back to Belfast, and reinstated in the prevost prison, the place of our first confinement. From various causes, we found it less crowded than before, but still well peopled. In each apartment, we had room for our mattresses, a table, and some chairs. Sentinels were placed, only on the outside of our doors. The parade of loading with ball cartridge, and the terrific orders attending it, were dispensed with; and

our rest was undisturbed by nocturnal visits. Our friends, too, were admitted with less difficulty; and our intercourse with each other was less restricted. What is more, hopes of information having expired, *overseers* were no longer placed among us, *to watch for our souls;* and pen, ink, paper, and books were allowed us, so that we could amuse ourselves with writing, reading, or conversation, as circumstances might admit. Still, however, we had difficulties and distresses sufficient to exercise our patience. The resources of some of us were nearly exhausted and we were replaced on our former allowance of TWELVE PENCE IRISH, per day. The windows of our apartments had many broken panes. Some of the rooms had neither lock, nor latch; and dirt and stench continued to prevail over all. As Winter came on with its severities, our inconveniences and expenses were greatly encreased. Fuel became necessary, not only from the inclemency of the season, but the ravages of the soldiery. The sentinels, having none for themselves, began, early in November, to tear off bases and surbases; mouldings of doors, windows, and fireplaces; and, latterly, doors, door-frames, and window shutters: all which they burned in the rooms of the poorer prisoners for their own comfort. And, as no notice was taken of this, they proceeded to such partitions, as were constructed with wooden uprights and laths. Hence, before the middle of

of December, the house was pervious to every blast. And, as these depredations were made by night, our rest was so much disturbed, that our situation was truly uncomfortable, and some of us suffered, severely, in our health. In a word, we continued prisoners; and these circumstances, added to the loathsomeness of our prison, as before mentioned, did not permit us to forget that we were such, or to enjoy the few indulgences with which we were favoured.

Thus situated, our only comfort arose from the expectation that, if any change should hereafter be made, in our situation, it could not be for the *worse*, as that, in the aspect and state of the country, was so much for the *better*. In fact, the country had become perfectly tranquil, and the public mind composed. Of this there could be no clearer evidence than Belfast exhibited. A patriotic band, *many of whom had been united Irishmen, and some of them active in promoting the union*, who had taken up arms to keep the rabble of their townsmen in order, laid down their muskets, unrigged their black cockades, and returned to their amusements, their country-houses, and their *pulpits;* and the *gallant* yeomen of the place were relieved from permanent duty. I have inserted "pulpits," because, in refutation of Mr. Pollock's vile calumny against the presbyterian ministers of Ulster, two of the number, resident in Belfast,

had regularly done duty, as private soldiers, in the brave and loyal band of BLACK COCKADES.

Notwithstanding all this, to the fresh surprise of us and our friends, we were hurried out, *on Christmas-day*, and carried back to our former apartment, on ship-board, to *enjoy* the remainder of the Winter. Our old inmates received us with great civility, and permitted us to take peaceable possession of the *castle*. Here, we were put on our former allowance of provisions, instead of our TWELVE PENCE IRISH, per day, and permitted to walk the quarter-deck* as before; but this indulgence the inclemency of the season now rendered unimportant, Indeed, when the sea ran high, the ship pitched so much, that walking the deck was extremely dangerous, as we had not gotten *sea-feet*. Hence, necessity alone compelled us to attempt it, as severe falls were generally the consequence; and one of us (Mr. Tennent) had his leg dangerously fractured, and nearly lost his life, in attempting, by a little smart exercise, to restore heat to his half-torpid limbs. Whether he had reason to regret this accident may be doubted, as it procured a removal to his own house, by which he

* When I mentioned formerly that "most of the prisoners were allowed to go on deck, only once a day, and for a short time," I should have added that we, "the Court," enjoyed the use of the quarter-deck, at pleasure, *during the day*.

he was exempted from the miseries of our wretched situation, during the most severe part of the Winter.

After his misfortune, we seldom ventured to go on deck; and, as we could neither walk, nor stand upright, below, we were obliged, for several weeks, to sit muffled in great-coats, with our bed-clothes wrapped round our lower extremities, and beating our feet on the boards from day to day, to prevent the loss of our limbs. When it blew hard, which was frequently the case, our situation was truly melancholy. Three of the ballast-ports were without stoppers, and consequently admitted both winds and waves. Hence, through all the storms of a most inclement Winter, we were reduced to the disagreeable alternative of being pinched with cold and drenched in water, by allowing them to continue open; or sitting in darkness, almost total, by stuffing them with rubbish; the only admissible light, in that case, being what passed through the two panes of glass in the port of our castle. In this situation, we endeavoured, as much as possible, to amuse ourselves with reading: but in this we labored under painful restrictions, the use of candles being prohibited, after eight o'Clock at night. This prohibition was so severely enforced, that we were frequently insulted for a few minutes excess; and, on one or two occasions, a ruffian

soldier, having unbolted the cover of the hatch-way, came down and kicked our candles from before us.

Under these circumstances, without variation, except what depended on the weather, did we languish, during the three dreary turbulent months, from the 25th of December till March 25th. And, in addition to the sufferings to which they exposed us, sickness and pain prevailed to a considerable extent. In the course of the Winter, several were obliged to be sent on shore for the preservation of their lives; yet many others, real objects of compassionate attention were left behind.

With me, these months passed very uncomfortably. I had two or three attacks of Gout, though no regular fit; and a bilious complaint, to which I had been long subject, was frequently troublesome. Latterly, from total want of exercise, cold, &c. I became very much crippled. Indeed, I could scarcely be otherwise; for, dreadfully inclement as the season was, I did not enjoy the comfort of fire-heat, or even the sight of a fire, for ten minutes, during the period I have mentioned, viz. from December 25th until the 25th of March. It is true, the gloom of the castle was somewhat dissipated by the kindness of a few friends, who continued their visits occasionally when the weather would admit.

admit. Yet, after the removal of Messrs. Tennent, Simms, and some others of my mess, my hours would have passed very heavily, had it not been for the lively, rational, and entertaining conversation of a Mr. David B. Warden. Now, that I have mentioned this young man, I hope I shall be excused for adding, that he was only a *poor Probationer;* under the care of the Presbytery of which I was an *unworthy Member*—that his father was tenant to the Earl of Londonderry, father of Lord V. Castlereagh, Minister of the day—that, after the Insurrection in the County of Down, he obtained, with great difficulty, permission to emigrate to America—that, for several years, he has been, and now is, Secretary to the American Legation at Paris—and that, besides filling that department with honor to himself, and satisfaction to the state, he has been rising as *regularly*, and almost as *rapidly*, in the *literary* world, as the son of his father's landlord has been sinking, in the *political.*

Thus far, I have written, partly from memory, and partly from detached memoranda, having kept no regular journal, till after my arrival in Scotland. However, I have not related a single circumstance, but on the most perfect recollection, which I could command, aided by these memoranda. Many things, truly painful and offensive, I have left unmentioned, because I attributed

I attributed them to the ignorance, indiscretion, or petulance, of individuals, strangers to the duties *imposed* on them, rather than to specific orders of government. Others I have endeavoured to present in colors as favorable as truth and honesty would admit. And, wherever praise was merited, I have not withholden it, in a single instance. But, if, in any thing, my feelings, or defects of memory, have led me into error, or misrepresentation, I shall not only submit to correction, but receive it with gratitude.

From the preceding detail—a detail to me truly painful—I proceed with pleasure to an account of a new change of situation, equally unexpected as any of the former; of new companions, and different scenes.

On the 25th of March, while sitting at dinner, a voice on deck called my name, adding that "a gentleman there requested to see me." I immediately rose, and got on deck, with considerable pain, as one of my feet was greatly inflamed. On seeing a guard there, I was very much surprised, though I supposed it to be only for my safe conduct to Belfast; but much more so, when I was informed that it was to escort me to a ship, with prisoners from Dublin, which lay at anchor, two miles below us; and even this surprise was encreased, when, on looking

looking over the ship's side, I perceived my old messmates, Messrs. Tennent, Simms, and Hunter, on board a boat, waiting till I should join them. Seeing this, I immediately called down to my fellow-prisoners, to tie up my mattress and bed-clothes, and heave them, with my other trifles, on deck. This they did, with little trouble or delay. My luggage was thrown into the boat, and I followed. On this, as on former occasions, neither warrant, nor written order, for my removal, was produced, though demanded.

Whether this step was taken, from premeditated cruelty, official wantonness, or idiotic resentment; or from whatever cause; the manner, in which it was taken, with respect to me at least, was mean, vile, and vengeful. On former occasions, want of previous notice was a trifling matter, as our removals were only to a short distance, and our friends had it in their power to send our luggage after us. Here, the case was widely different. We were now to be transported to another land, and immured in a military prison, between which and Ireland there was no intercourse by sea or land, either regular or direct. From the coldness of the climate, it must have been known that warm clothing would be necessary for the preservation of our lives; and, if the British Minister should copy the meanness and cruelty

of

of the Irish, in allowing us only TWELVE PENCE, per day, that money would be an article of equal necessity. Yet to these circumstances no attention whatever was paid. From our situation on shipboard, we had no means of keeping any clothes, except what we were using, and a few changes of linen, with some other small articles. When I was hurried off, my whole wardrobe, except what was on my back, consisted of one pair of stockings, and two shirts, only one of which was clean; and of money I was totally destitute, having lent my last guinea to the Captain of the ship, the day before. Fortunately, the rumor of Messrs. Tennent, &c. being on their way to the quay, to be put on board ship, and transported, no body knew whither, reached Mrs. Dickson. The idea instantly occurred to her, that, as they had formerly been my fellow-prisoners, I might be called for, and carried with them. On this, she dispatched a messenger to the quay, with eight guineas—*all she had in her possession.* These, to my great comfort, arrived in time to be delivered to me by our naval guardian, Captain Steel: but a boat would not be granted to have my washables and other clothes, then in Belfast, sent for, that they might be forwarded by the same conveyance.

Thus scantily equipped and provided, was I, with my old messmates, shoved off from the

Postlewaite

Postlethwaite, my relatives, and my country, to enter upon a short, but stormy, voyage, and pass into a long exile; or, as my reverend fathers and brethren of the Synod of Ulster interpreted the matter; thus did I, in contempt of a law of their body, set out on my "*removal to a foreign country*, and thereby forfeit all right and claim of my wife and children, on my demise, to the benefits of a fund, for the support of the widows and Orphans of Presbyterian ministers, to which I had contributed, as a subscriber, for TWENTY EIGHT YEARS.

About half an hour wafted us from the side of the "Postlethwaite" to that of the "Aston Smith," which was accompanied by an armed Tender, *for our protection.* Being ushered on Board, we were shewn down to the hold, where we found Thomas Addis Emmet, John Sweetman, John Chambers, Roger and Arthur O'Connor, John Swiney, Edward Hudson, Joseph Cormick, William James M'Nevin, Matthew Dowling, Thomas Russel, Hugh Wilson, William Dowdall, George Cuming, Samuel Neilson, and Joseph Cuthbert. On looking round, we perceived, to our great satisfaction, twenty births, tolerably decent and clean, four of which were reserved for us. We learned also, that, in addition to the provisions put on board by order of government, the Dublin prisoners had been allowed to lay in a conside-

rable stock, at their own expense. This was a fortunate circumstance for us Northerns, as our detention on board was protracted by the severity of the weather, and we had been allowed neither time, nor opportunity, to lay in a morsel for ourselves.

On the 26th. of March, about four o'clock in the morning, we and our armed escort made sail, in a hard gale, which soon encreased to a perfect storm. We got up to the Cumbraes Isles, at the mouth of the river Clyde, in less than nine hours. Happily for us all, we had day-light, and the wind nearly astern, as our vessel was *greatly deficient in ballast*, and the crews of both *entire strangers, not only to the river Clyde, but to the North Channel.* In the evening, we came to anchor, a few miles up the river. Next day, we advanced little, as we had either a dead calm, or contrary winds, in squalls from the mountains, and an out-running tide, as usual, for seven hours. On the morning of the 28th we made loose, kept turning up the whole time of flood, against a hard gale, with sudden squalls, and, in the afternoon, came to, about two miles below Greenock, after having narrowly escaped being put ashore. During the whole of the 29th. it blew a storm; and the wind continued so violent on the 30th. that the ships could not attempt turning up to Greenock. However, as our travelling equipage from Edinburgh,

Edinburgh, with a Colonel Hay and three king's messengers from London, had arrived, and were in waiting, it was determined by them to land us at Goorock, a small town, nearly opposite, and rather to leeward; but as the wind blew so fresh, and the sea ran so high, that this could not be safely attempted in boats, orders were given to run the vessel, as close as possible, into the small creek before the town, for the purpose, as soon as guards should be seen on the shore to receive us. This short delay gave us an opportunity of viewing, from the deck, a train of carriages, which excited some idea of *Magnificence*; and a body of horse and foot, which, fifty years ago, would have been called "*an army*," marching in their rear, and afterwards drawn up on the beach. From what all of us had experienced, or known, of military *duties* and *discipline*, during some preceding years, I need hardly say that the appearance of such a force excited an idea very different from the former. Be that as it may, they had no sooner become stationary, than a signal was given, on which our ship made loose, and ran into the bay, in doing which she was within half her length of bumping on a stony point, and in a heavy surf. However, thank God, we got safe ashore, though with considerable difficulty, and, as some thought, with no little danger.

Thus escaped from the dangers of winds and waves, I shall pause for a moment to review the five days, during which we were exposed to them. That these dangers were encreased by the ignorance or neglect of those, to whom the outfit for our voyage was entrusted by government, I have already said. If it proceeded, from neglect, I now say, that that neglect was worse than shameful; as, however lightly their employers might have borne the *gain* of *our loss*, they could not be supposed to be pleased with sending our guards and navigators, merely as a forlorn hope, to perish with us; even though the ships and stores should be thought unworthy of notice. And in justice, I add that this ignorance, or neglect, was the only thing, subject to the control of government, of which we had cause to complain, on the present occasion. Our births, as I have already said, were as comfortable as could be expected, our bed-sacks and blankets being new and clean. With the aid of some private stores, our breakfasts and dinners, though somewhat coarse, were good and plentiful. And, during our stay on board, the behaviour of our soldiers and seamen was correct, civil, and obliging. From the same sense of justice, and as an encouragement to other soldiers to imitate their example, I subjoin, that " our guard was a party of the Angusshire Fencibles, under the command

command of a Captain Ewing, and a junior Officer, whose name I am sorry that I cannot recollect."

As these circumstances placed us as much at ease, as our situation would admit, and left us free from external interruption, we were at perfect liberty to indulge in conversation, for which we were not at a loss for matter, or inclination. We were twenty in number All of us had been prisoners, not only in different gaols, but different provinces. Hence, though strangers personally, we were mostly known to each other, by name and character. And though the circumstances and pretexts, under which we were committed and confined, were widely different, a community of suffering drew us at once, by a common sympathy, into a common mass. Hence, as every one had much to communicate, and all were anxious to know the concerns of their fellow-sufferers, had we been confined to the hold of our ship, for five weeks, instead of days, the time would have been too short for our various recitals. In fact, they so fully employed our tongues, and occupied our attention, that, so far from thinking or speaking of any thing else, we seldom took time to indulge in conjecture, or reasoning, concerning our destination, though to us—to me at least—perfectly unknown, till after our landing in Scotland. Sometimes, indeed, the

state

state of the unhappy Neilson, one of our number silenced every tongue, and wounded every heart. A severe fever, under which he had long laboured in Dublin, and notwithstanding the continuance of which, he had been barbarously embarked with the other prisoners, had rendered him, not only weak, but completely delirious. This weakness and delirium still continued, and were not entirely removed till long after our arrival at Fort-George.

As some may read this Narrative, to whom we, or most of us, twenty are totally unknown, and who may wish to know who, and whence we were, and of what description; this place may be as proper, as any other for the gratification of their curiosity, With a view to this, as I have already inserted our names, I have only to add, that we were selected from the three provinces of Ulster, Leinster, and Munster, but, principally, from the city of Dublin, and town of Belfast; that we comprehended, in our body, three magistrates, three barristers, two physicians, one attorney, one apothecary, one printer and bookseller, one printer and proprietor of a News paper, one dentist, one military captain, one runner to a bank, one merchant Taylor, and one Presbyterian Minister, with an eminent Porter brewer; two wholesale merchants, one broker, and two young gentlemen, without profession, trade, or calling.

In

In this statement there *may* be one error, besides some incorrectness. The error may be, in respect to the Messrs. O'Connor, whose being Magistrates I have mentioned on report; but that they were both Counsellors is matter of certainty. The incorrectness is in saying that such and such gentlemen "then were," Magistrates &c. &c.; whereas I should have said, "they had been," viz. before their arrest. There is a defect also. To the professional part I should have added "A Clergyman of the established Church," as Arthur O'Connor was ordained as such, previous to his being called to the Bar; and, as episcopal ordination impresses an *indelible character*, he not only, then was, and now is, but ever must be, a *Clergyman*. Of our circumstances, I shall only say, that we *had* all been *independent*—most of us *respectable* in our professions—some possessed of large capitals in trade—and others of considerable landed property. Perhaps it may not be amiss to mention here, that, as we were selected from the three principal provinces of Ireland, we were respectively members of the three principal Churches in the Kingdom, and which alone government has yet acknowledged *as Churches*. Nor is it unworthy of notice, that the number of Catholics, Protestants, and Presbyterians, in our little colony, was in an

inverse

inverse ratio of the number of each denomination, in Ireland at large. Perhaps, the proportion may be stated as follows, though not correctly.

Catholics, two thirds of the people,	prisoners,	4
Presbyterians, more than one fifth of	do.	6
Protestants, less than one seventh of	do.	10!!!

From this statement, a fact truly anomalous, two presumptions arise: 1st. As a majority of the prisoners were deemed principal authors and promoters of the Irish insurrection; and, as only one fifth of said prisoners were Catholics; the representation of that insurrection as "a Popish rebellion" cannot be confided in as *the very truth.* 2dly. That, the Protestant ascendency in Ireland, however pre-eminent in splendid titles, lucrative offices, and overwhelming power, has as little pre-eminence to boast of in loyalty, as in numbers, *where loyalty is left to provide for itself.*

Having endeavoured to do justice to our convoy, and mentioned such circumstances, concerning us, as strangers might wish to be informed of, I shall now proceed with my Narrative, which will present, to my readers, persons and things, so characteristically different from those exhibited in the preceding pages, that, did it rest merely on my own credit, I could scarcely expect to be believed. And I am sorry to say that the contrast between our treatment

treatment in Ireland, and that which we experienced from our first setting foot on British ground, must ever cast a dark shade over the Irish Minister, his minions, and his measures, of the Summer of 1798, and the three succeeding years. However, truth ought to be told; and justice requires that I should represent, fairly and honestly, the conduct of the British government, and its servants with whom I was particularly connected, during *two years and nine months* of exile and imprisonment. And, in doing this, I shall confine myself to extracts from my journal, and copies of official documents, at this moment in my possession.

I have said that we were landed, at Goorock, on the 30th. of March. On the beach, the military were drawn up in two lines, between which we were conducted, with polite attention, by colonel Hay and the king's messengers, to four coaches, into which we were handed, five and five. This ceremony over, our military escort took their stations—the infantry in our front and rere, and captain Bird with forty four of the Rutland Horse, twenty-two on each side. Thus arranged, and accompanied by a multitude, which, not only crowded the road but covered the adjacent fields, we proceeded to Greenock (two miles and an half) in solemn silence, and with funeral pace. Here, our reception and entertainment excited an equal

pleasure and surprise. Instead of being thrust into a *black-hole*, *a military guard-house*, stinking prevost, *or gloomy prison*, fortified with *bolts* and *bars*, and parcelled out in *dark*, *damp*, *cold*, and *bed-less* cells, we were ushered into *a large assembly room*, with a blazing coal-fire; and, instead of a *junk of beef* in an *iron-bound tub*, with coarsest ship-bread, and a jug *of vapid small beer*; in about twenty minutes, we were shewn across a lobby, into another handsome room of equal size, where we found a *very good dinner*, neatly laid out, and *servants* to attend us. At table, we had *good porter* and *ale*, in *abundance*; and, after dinner, a pint of port each.

In the evening, Colonel Hay, and the king's Messengers, Messrs. Smyth, Sylvester, and Scott, called on us, and told us, that they were ordered to get, from us, the money in our possession, which they would return, on our arrival at Fort-George. This demand was immediately complied with, by some wholly; by others, I believe, only in part. On receipt of this money they retired, and did not appear again for several hours, except to introduce some respectable merchants, who wished to see two of our number, Messrs. Tennent and Simms, with whom they had been in the habit of commercial intercourse.

Their

Their introduction led to the knowledge that, on the representations in government papers, the Irish insurrection was firmly believed, in Scotland, to be a *real Popish rebellion.* One of the gentlemen, who knew that Messrs. Tennent and Simms were Presbyterians, and having learned that I was a minister of that persuasion, in a low voice expressed his surprise that *we* would connect ourselves with *Papists*, and much more that we would be concerned in a *Popish rebellion.* Overhearing this, I interfered, and asked the gentleman, in a voice equally low, why he called the insurrection, in Ireland, " a *Popish rebellion ?*" He answered pertly that " he did so, on the authority of government, and that it was *known to be a fact.*" I replied, that " such an assertion was one of the many falsehoods, by which the people of Britain were deceived and misled, in respect to Ireland." As this seemed to offend him, I then asked him, what opinion he supposed the Irish government to entertain of us twenty, then present. To this he answered, rather peevishly, but without reserve, that " they must consider us, *as the most guilty,* or the *most dangerous,* or they would not have *distinguished* us, as they had done." On this, with a view to remove an idea, equally

unfounded and pernicious, I withdrew, to a side table, and wrote our names, classed by our religious profession, as underneath.

John Sweetman, John Swiney, Dr. M'Nevin, Joseph Cormick.	Catholics.	T. A. Emmet, R. O'Connor, A. O'Connor, John Chambers, Mat. Dowling, Thomas Russell, Edward Hudson, Hugh Wilson, Wm. Dowdall, Robert Hunter.	Protestants of the Established Church of Ireland.
Wm. Tennent, Robert Simms, Samuel Neilson, George Cuming, Joseph Cuthbert, Dr. Dickson.	Presbyterians.		

This done, I returned, and put my little scroll into his hand, whispering; "please, Sir, to look at that; and then tell me what becomes of your Popish Rebellion, on your own supposition that government consider *us*, as the most *guilty*, or most *dangerous* of its enemies?"*

While his eyes were intent on the paper, he seemed surprised, and perplexed; and, on returning it, hinted a suspicion that I was *jesting* with him. On this I passed it round my fellow-prisoners, asking them, as it circulated, whether I had truly stated their religious profession? This question, which all answered in the affirmative

* Should I be deemed officious in this exposure, I beg that it may be remembered, that I did no more than the Secret Committees of Irish Lords and Commons had done before me, in various parts of their *valuable* Reports, dated in 1798.

mative, attracted the attention of other gentlemen present. The paper was, therefore, handed to each of them, and on perusing it, and being informed of the purpose for which it was written, their *faith* in the representations, which had been pressed upon them as *faithful*, seemed to be shaken. At any rate, during the remainder of their stay with us, *Popish Rebellion* was not even hinted at. Considering this developement as an act of justice to the Scottish mind, I repeated it, *more than once*, during our journey.

In the course of the evening, we had tea served, which, with its accompaniments were all good. A little before ten o'Clock, our *guardian Angels* appeared, and informed us, that we were all to sleep in the room where we then were; and that, as we were to set out early, they had taken the liberty to order beds. Soon after, servants appeared, cleared off tables, chairs, &c.; and, equally to our surprise and satisfaction, brought in *twenty* good feather-beds, with blankets, sheets, bolsters, pillows, &c. perfectly clean, which they arranged neatly on the floor. This over, we were accommodated with Porter, Ale, or a draught of Brandy and water, at our own choice, previous to our going to bed; and then told, "that we need not get up in the morning, till called. No sentinels were

were placed in our room, but guards were stationed in the lobby, hall, and around the house, during the night, in great abundance.

Sunday, March 31st. we were roused early, and proceeded in our coaches, under our escort of cavalry, to Bishopton-Inn, (eleven miles) where we fouud the family and servants all in waiting, and in full-dress; and the breakfast-table set out in a style, on which even the eye of a *Doctor Johnson* might have dwelt with pleasure. After breakfast, we were driven through Renfrew, Govan, and the Gorbals of Glasgow. During this part of our journey, not only the roads, but adjoining fields, were perfectly crowded with people, who kept pace with us for many miles. On our approach to Glasgow, the multitude became so great, that our escort seemed to have some apprehension of a rescue, though the conduct of the multitude was perfectly peaceable, and their countenances expressive, only of seriousness and anxious curiosity. About five, in the afternoon, we reached Hamilton, after a journey of thirty-three miles, where we found a pretty good dinner in readiness, with Porter, Ale, and Wine, as on the preceding day. In the evening, we were served with tea, and afterwards accommodated with a draught of Porter, Ale, or Spirits, and water, and twenty good beds, as

at

at Greenock. Here also, the principal gentlemen of the place waited on us, and paid us the most polite attention.

The progress and entertainment of these two days I have copied, verbatim, from notes then taken; and, as there was little variety, in these two respects, during the remainder of our journey, I shall only add, that we did not, in any one instance, fare worse, and, in more than one, not only much better, but *sumptuously*. In Aberdeen, our dinner was equal to any thing of the kind I have ever seen or tasted, in variety and elegance. We sat down to *twenty-seven* dishes, including all the rarities of the country, cooked in style, and elegantly laid out. Our side-board made a good appearance; five servants attended us; our wine, both red and white, was good; and the quantity left to our own discretion. In the evening, we had several visitants, among whom were some of the magistrates, military gentlemen, and other genteel inhabitants of the place; as also captain Bird, commander of our military escort, who politely came to take leave of us, after an accompaniment of 181 miles. To him and the dragoons under his command, I feel that my feeble praise is justly due. During this long, and to them cold, and fatiguing journey, his and their behaviour to us was attentive and respectful; and, though in our approach to some of the larger

larger towns, and passage along their streets, the crowd was so compact that progressive motion was scarcely possible, not an individual received a blow, an insult, or even an impassioned curse, except in one instance so far as I know. Justice calls for the same tribute, *without exception*, to the Windsor Foresters, an equal number of which accompanied us, during the remainder of our tour; 107 miles. Were I to hazard a supposition, I would add that we owed to the splendor of our coaches, and respectful behaviour of our guards, some share of that respect, which was paid us by the multitude, in many places, through which we passed. On our route, from Barry to Fort-George, it was more than once observed, "that we must be *very great men*, or we would not have been escorted by such a retinue." This idea was not unnatural, as a troop of horse had not been seen, in that quarter, from 1746 until our arrival.

Of the military, who not only guarded the doors, but encompassed the walls, of the Inns where we breakfasted, took our meridian refreshment, or dined and slept, my feelings oblige me to express my unqualified approbation. They were, generally, the volunteers (yeomen) of the towns and villages, where we stopped. The conduct of the privates was uniformly correct, inoffensive, and discreet; and to the officers we owed some of the comforts, and much

of

of the local information, which our journey supplied. To the gentlemen of Perth, in particular, I am indebted for personal attentions, the recollection of which I shall ever cherish with gratitude and pleasure.

Of the magistrates, and other gentlemen, who were admitted to visit us, during nine successive evenings, I must say, that their conduct was to us truly pleasing. We had not one instance of impertinent intrusion, or even an attempt, so far as I know, to procure admission to our room, without our previous consent: nor do I recollect a word, or look, which could lead to the suspicion that their object was merely to stare at, much less to insult, "*wild Irishmen*," or "*Irish rebels*," or "both *united*." That their curiosity was strong, not only to see, but converse with, us, cannot be doubted, from the rumors that must have preceded us; especially, as the person and manners of an Irishman were as much unknown to the great mass of the Highland people, soldiers and a few sailors excepted, as those of a Hottentot, Esquimaux, or Laplander. Yet, generally, an interest in our situation seemed stronger than the desire of knowing who we were, or what we were like; and several, when leaving us, expressed, not only their wish, but *hope*, that we would be speedily released, and restored to our liberty, country, and friends.

From our outset, on this journey, till our arrival at Fort-George, the attention and services of our civil guardians, his majesty's messengers, were great and uninterrupted. While they watched over us, they were uniformly ministering to us, morning, noon, and night: so that our comfortable accommodation seemed as much an object of their care, as our safe custody. Nor were their services confined to the supply of present wants. Alarms imposed upon them the task of providing for our security against future evils. At Greenock, we got accounts of Fort-George, equally unfavorable and unfounded. The account of the climate was chilling; and that of the supposed difficulty of procuring clothes suitable to it half-froze us. Hence we determined to purchase, by the way, flannels, warm waistcoatings, wrappers, &c. &c. wherever to be had, and to have them stowed in our coaches. On mentioning this determination to our guardians who were also our purse-bearers, they kindly proposed to purchase for us, and pay our accounts, which they did to a considerable amount, to our great satisfaction, and with equally great trouble to themselves. In the different towns, where we spent a night, they went from shop to shop; and, where orders were not sufficiently explicit, they had the goods sent to us, that we might choose and market, according to our own judgment. In this and every thing else, by which they could serve

serve us, all three were civil and obliging; but Mr. Sylvester acted the part of a brother, or rather submitted to the drudgery of a slave, during our whole journey.

Justice, honor, gratitude, jointly demand that I should now say something of Major, afterwards Colonel, Hay; and of him I can say nothing but good. His attention and fatigue were great indeed. During the ten days of our journey we never saw him, till after dinner, and then, only for a short time. Though he had expresses regularly forwarded, to have provision made for our entertainment and accommodation, yet he was off before us, on horseback, every morning, in time to have our breakfast set out at the first stage, while he was taking his own. In like manner he preceded us to the second, and ordered cold meat and other refreshments to be in readiness for us. And, at the evening stage he visited the kitchen, examined the beds in the house, and where the number was short of *twenty*, or the quality not sufficiently good, he ordered the deficiency to be supplied by the principal inhabitants of the place. In short, his conduct, both on our journey and afterwards, was such, that, when we saw the account of his having fallen a victim, in the Helder expedition, we mourned him as a brother.

That these circumstances were, to us, highly gratifying, cannot be doubted. That they im-

pressed our minds with opinions and sentiments as highly favorable to our guards, guardians, and the people, through whom we were passing, must be naturally supposed. Yet this gratification was not without alloy. We were captives in a foreign land, on our way to a fortified military prison, under the control of military strangers, far removed from friend or acquaintance, and the consoling endearments of parent, brother, wife, or children. We could not banish the recollection of the prisons in our native country, under the control of our countrymen, and regulated by the mandates of an Irish Minister or his executioners. The severities and sufferings in Kilmainham and Newgate, pressed upon the memory, and harrowed up the feelings of some; while others shuddered at the recollection of the noise and nastiness of a Belfast *black-hole:* the privations, alarms, and stench of its *Prevost prison;* and the horrors of a *floating Bastile*, in which their lives had been twice endangered, by the extremes of heat and cold, in the short space of eight months. With these recollections, fresh upon our memory, we could not look forward without bristling apprehensions. Not only confinement, bolts, bars, bayonets, and ball-cartridges, not to mention, iron-bound tubs, vapid small-beer, and stinking pork; but narrow, dark, damp, dirty, and bed-less cells, ruthless gaolers, heavy irons, brutal sheriffs, deadly doctors, and ruffian turnkeys,

keys, presented themselves to our imagination; especially, when the possibility occurred to our thoughts, that the breath of the Irish Minister, or his minions, might be wafted across the Northern Channel, and poison the atmosphere, even of Fort-George. To these apprehensions, gloomy as they were, a darker hue was given, by the uncertainty how long our confinement and exile might be continued, to what more distant region our banishment might be extended, or to what distresses we, and the dearest objects of our affections might be destined.

Though this uncertainty had continued to hang over us for years, thank God, and the worthy people, into whose charge we were about to be delivered, our apprehensions, were, in some particulars, almost immediately soothed, and, soon after, dissipated. The change in our situation and treatment was so great and so pleasing, that sometimes, I could not restrain my imagination from playing with the thought that I had been transported not only to a *new Heaven and a new Earth*, but to the society of spirits more perfect, than those, by which I had been haunted, for months before.

On Tuesday, April 9th. we arrived at Fort-George. Our entrance might be called solemn. The very aspect of the place made it so to me, who had never, before, seen a regular fortification.

A numerous

A numerous guard was drawn out, and the multitude assembled, which included great part of the rank, and fashion of the country, was so numerous that persons, unacquainted with the improved state of the northern counties of Scotland, and, consequently encreased numbers of its inhabitants might have supposed that one half of their population was collected, on the occasion. Through them and the guards, our coaches drove to a stair, up which we were conducted to the rampart: and thence along a wooden bridge, thrown across the street on our account, to the third floor of the garrison; and shown into a spacious room, where we found an uncommonly large grate filled with a blazing coal-fire.

We had not enjoyed this many minutes, when lieutenant colonel Stewart, (the lieutenant governor) the Fort-major, and some other officers, made their appearance. Panting as we were with anxiety to know our fates, their minds did not seem to be much more at ease than ours. After a few polite inquiries concerning our journey, health, accommodations, &c. &c. the lieutenant governor, taking a paper, from his pocket, said: "gentlemen, it is necessary that I should read to you the orders, which I have received from government; though I assure you, to me a very painful task." That he felt it such, was evident, from the tremulous

tremulous voice, and interrupted breath, with which he performed it. On perceiving, the indignation, which these orders excited, expressed by every countenance, and hearing it from one tongue; " gentlemen," said he, As a *servant of government*, I cannot hear *reflections on government*. I own, I cannot reconcile your appearance and these orders; yet, I must obey them. However, it shall be your own fault, if ever they are executed with severity." On this, he, and the other gentlemen, retired, seemingly, and, as I believe, really, affected with our situation.*

Soon after, our table was handsomely laid out, and a good dinner, *of five dishes*, served up. We had two servants to attend us. Our allowance of drink was, one dozen of Porter, one of Ale, and ten bottles of Port. And we were informed, that we might have Tea in the Evening, or a cold supper, with a bottle of Porter, or Ale, for each, as we should choose.

After dinner, twenty rooms, each between sixteen and eighteen feet square, were allotted us by ballot, sixteen of which were laid with brick over the boarden floor. On taking possession,

* How different this from the conduct of our own petty upstarts, during the preceding years! I am sorry I cannot produce a copy of these *original* instructions. I had such, but, some how or other, it has fallen aside.

session, we found them clean, dry, airy, well plaistered and ceiled, with windows sufficiently large, well glazed, and secured, on the outside, with iron bars. In each room was a neat four-posted bed with good curtains, Paillasse, Mattress, Sheets, one under and three upper Blankets, a cotton coverlet, Bolster, Pillow and Pot; a rush bottomed Chair, and small oaken Table; a bottle and Bason, a commode, fire-irons, coal-box, candlestick, snuffers and extinguisher; all entirely new, and good in their kind. To these was afterwards added a bell, on the outside of each door, with two pulls on the inside, one at the fire-place, and one at the bed, that in case of sickness, fire, or alarm, our keepers might be roused, and assistance procured. Four invalids were exempted from duty, for our service, and allowed double pay; two, to make our beds, keep our rooms clean, and do other chamber and personal services; and the other two, to keep our knives, forks, spoons &c. as they ought to be, bring our provisions from the Inn, and attend us at table. Each of us had Captains allowance of coal and candle; nor did we burn a dipped candle, except for one Fortnight, during my residence in the Fort. For our health, equal provision was made. The Surgeon of the Fort had instructions to attend us, and supply us with Medicine, when necessary, which he regularly did. In one instance of dangerous

dangerous illness, a Physician was called, from the distance of sixty miles, and liberally paid by government. Were I here to pass unnoticed the attentions of the Rev. Mr. Stulker, Chaplain of the Fort, I should think myself unpardonable, as they were equally kind and unremitting.

The preceding statement I have made, with the most scrupulous exactness, and publish with great pleasure, as a tribute justly due to the British ministry and the servants of the crown, with whom we were placed. In any circumstances such attention and liberality would have done them honor. But, with such representations and instructions from Ireland as gave rise to the orders transmitted to Fort-George, under which our confinement was, not only almost uninterrupted and solitary, but such as nearly precluded conversation, even during the few hours that our doors were unlocked, their conduct was more than honorable, and shall ever command my warmest praise. Nay, when I contrast it with what *I knew, witnessed,* and *felt,* during the preceding year, in what *was* "my *country,*" but *now is,* or *yet may be, I know not what,* through the intrigues of an apostate, and the enormities of a faction, into whose hands God, in his displeasure, seems to

have delivered it, I feel praise too cool for *their* merits, and language too feeble for the expression of *my* sensations.*

On the morning after our arrival, we were visited by the king's messengers, who, according to promise, returned each of us the money given them at Greenock, or faithfully accounted for it. Major Hay also called on us, before he left the Fort. After some conversation, he asked me, as I believe he did the other prisoners, my name, my profession, the former place of my residence, my age, and the number of my family; the answers to all which questions he wrote in his pocket-book. On my asking the reason of this particularity, he told me that, "from our appearance and conduct, and the orders sent to the governor, he was convinced that we had been grossly misrepresented to the British government——that he wished, as far as he could, to do away such misrepresentations—and that, on his arrival in London, he would state what he had seen, and what he thought, respecting

* For several months, after writing the above, a ray of hope, occasionally, shot across my mind that this seeming "visitation of wrath" might be only a wholesome correction of national meanness, corruption, and venality; and that, in the event, it might produce a national renovation of mind, a resurrection of a pure political body, and a consequent restoration of dignity, liberty, and peace. But, from many, *many* things, which have since taken place, particularly the extinction of Ireland's political existence; and the present exertions to bury her below the possibility of resurrection, I feel tempted to abandon even that hope. I WILL NOT ABANDON IT.

respecting us, to his Majesty's Ministers." This, I have every reason to believe, he did with *feeling*, and with *faithfulness*.

For some time after this, our situation was variable and fluctuating. Our first ten days gave us the fullest conviction that our Governor, in the discharge of his duty, meant to act with a lenient hand. But, whether from new Irish mandates to the Duke of Portland, or from what other cause, unknown to us, he was obliged to change his measures.

Lest this change, or rather these changes, should be misjudged of, or doubted, I shall now present them, *with all their variations*, in regular extracts from my journal, and copies of the Governor's official notes.

April 18th. Till this date, we were permitted to walk on the ramparts, during the greater part of the day, ten at a time, in two inclosures, five in each, and attended by sentinels. These were placed, two in each inclosure, and one in a very small intermediate space, to prevent our passing backward and forward. These inclosures were sufficiently large, for every purpose of air and exercise; and so situated that, from the banquette, we were entertained with a widely extended scenery, as variegated, wildly great, and rudely picturesque, as water, moor, mountain, cultivated fields,

one large handsome town, several villages, a few gentlemen's seats, some good farm-houses, thriving plantations of great extent, Culloden *with all its recollections*, a considerable succession of trading and other vessels, a constant paddling of ferry and fishing-boats, and a long and lofty ridge of the Scottish Alps, at a distance, exposing their bare heads, and naked shoulders, to the pitiless storms, could present to an eye accustomed to tame and temperate regions. Of the salubrity, and comparative mildness, of the air, nothing need be said, when it is known that the Fort stands upon a dry gravelly soil, and is two-thirds surrounded by the sea, which, at high water, washes its walls, in circumference more than a mile.

April 23d. Notice was given us, by Major Bailee, that government allowance rendered retrenchment necessary, which accordingly took place: viz.-from ten to eight bottles of wine, at and after dinner.

As we had all read the few books, which, fortunately, some of our number had packed up with their luggage, we applied to the Governor on the 18th, for liberty to order some from Inverness, as also, two daily Newspapers from London. This he assured us, by a very polite note, he could not grant, without instructions from

from Government. But, for these instructions he wrote immediately, and, on the return of post, permission to procure books was granted.

April 26th. Hitherto we were indulged in writing to our friends, without any other restriction than sending our letters, to the Governor, *unsealed*. As this exposed him to daily attention, of which his situation would not admit, he sent us a note to-day, of which the following is a copy.

"*Fort-George, April, 26, 1799.*

"Lieut.-Governor Stuart requests the State Prisoners may send their letters to him once in the week—on Saturday; and that they will abstain from all allusions to politics, or the measures of Government, in their correspondence."

STUART, Lieut-Gov."

April 29th. Information was given us that our allowance was farther reduced—that it was insufficient for our support, on the existing arrangement—and, therefore, that, besides other articles, we must purchase our own drink, which was not to exceed a pint of wine, and the same of porter, for each man. Spirits, as from the beginning, totally prohibited.

April 30th. This was a day of great bustle, and great business. We held a general council; opened a regular communication with Mrs. M'Gregor,

M'Gregor, who supplies our table; scrutinized her proposals; sketched various plans, and made out estimates; the result of all which was, the discovery that our allowance would admit of breakfast and dinner, as usual, with six bottles of wine, and twelve of porter, for twenty people, by adding one shilling, per man, daily; and that several other articles, *hitherto supplied by Government*, must be procured at our own expense.

May 1st. The Governor, I presume, from information of our situation, yesterday, ordered us to be furnished with breakfast, dinner, drink, and evening tea, or supper, as formerly, till he should receive farther instructions.

May 6th. Instructions arrived, an extract of which the Governor sent us by a deputation, consisting of Major Bailie, two other Officers, and a Mr. Mackay, now superintendent of state prisoners; and was as follows:

Lieut.-Governor Stuart encloses herewith an extract from instructions he has just received from the Duke of Portland, by his Majesty's command.—It is needless for the Lieutenant-Governor to observe, that he must fulfil the instructions correctly.—The prisoners will, in consequence, withdraw to their several apartments.—They will assemble to breakfast, at nine in the morning, by ten in number.—An hour

hour will be allowed for breakfast, when the other half of the prisoners will assemble—an *Officer*, or *Keeper*, and a *Sentinel, being in the room*. They will assemble in like manner, at two o'clock, and at four. The wine will be equally divided. An hour, or if the prisoners choose, an hour and an half, will be allowed for dinner. As they cannot assemble in the evening, such of the prisoners as choose will order tea, or bread and cheese to their own apartments. The Lieutenant-Governor has ordered Mr. Mackay, superintendent of State prisoners, to call on each of the prisoners, in his own apartment, for the money they may have, which the Lieutenant-Governor learned from the King's Messengers amounted to £ The prisoners will mark each sum themselves opposite their names, and the Lieutenant-Governor has put his receipt at the bottom of the paper. The prisoners will observe, all their letters must be sent to the Duke of Portland. The Star and Sun News-papers will be sent to such prisoners as choose to order them, and books as formerly. The prisoners can only air, two at a time, which they may continue to do, from nine in the morning till eight in the evening.

STUART, Lieut.-Gov."

Be it here noted that, two hours and an half being deducted for breakfast and dinner, the time for air and exercise is reduced to eight hours

hours and an half, which allows each individual FIFTY-ONE minutes in twenty-four hours. Be it observed also, that, as by these orders, we could neither breakfast nor dine, but in the presence of an officer, or keeper, and a sentinel, lest we should have the pleasure of conversing freely one with another; so the two, walking at the same time, were locked in separate inclosures, and environed by sentinels, lest they should even speak to each other. I have only to add that, though, in the extract of orders sent us, pen and ink are not mentioned, in that given to Mr. Mackay, for his direction, the Duke of Portland positively prohibits their use by us, except for the purpose of writing to our friends, *in the presence of a keeper*, and assigns, as a reason "*the gross abuse of that privilege by the Dublin prisoners.*"

The most superficial observer must here perceive, that the preclusion of conversation at our table, the prevention of intercourse between the two prisoners permitted to walk at the same time, and the prohibition of pen and ink, must have been conceived in the same brain, and proceeded from the same source. And the reason assigned for the last makes it as plain that the brain was that of the Irish Minister, or his clerk, and the source *his heart;* and that, when he could not poison the air of Fort-George by his *deleterious breath*, he *embittered* it by

by transfusing a portion of his *gall* through the secretarial pen of the Duke of Portland. In a word, it affords a strong presumption that every thing painful in our confinement originates in Ireland; and that we owe all that is comfortable *exclusively*, to the British Minister, and our worthy Governor.

May 7th. Locked up yesterday evening, agreeable to orders. Visited this morning, at eight—locked up till nine, when we were conducted to breakfast—after breakfast, put under lock till about twelve, when, to our astonishment, we were informed that we might walk, ten and ten, as usual, i. e. five in each inclosure, and continue to do so, till six in the evening.

This indulgence, as I afterwards learned from Dr. Roy, Surgeon of the garrison, we owed entirely to the Governor, whose humanity conferred it, at the risque of ministerial *rebuke*, perhaps *dismissal*.

Until the receipt of the last orders, we were permitted, on Sunday mornings, to have prayers in our mess-room, to which our keepers, attendants, and the soldiers on guard, paid particular attention.

May 10th. This day brought new orders, which were communicated in the following note.

"*Fort-George, May,* 10, 1799.

"The prisoners are to be locked up at all times, except when at meals, or airing—they will be permitted to air, as follows—at ten in the morning, ten prisoners will go out in two divisions, as usual, and may remain until one o'clock, when the other ten may go out, and remain till four o'clock, after which the prisoners are not to be permitted to go out. This allows three hours for air and exercise, to each man—they must mess in two divisions, as formerly directed; and it being impossible to serve each prisoner in his own apartment, one choosing one thing and one another, they will please to agree among themselves, whether they will have *tea*, or bread and cheese &c.—and they will be permitted to assemble in two Divisions, as at dinner, from seven to half past eight, when they must retire to their apartments.

STUART, Lieut-Gov.

N. B. To be copied by Mr. Mackay."

May 12th. Sent a message to the Lieut. Gov. requesting a renewal of our permission to assemble for prayer, on Sunday mornings, with the additional liberty for me to preach to my fellow-prisoners. His answer was that "he would be happy in granting every possible indulgence, but was sorry his *orders* obliged him to refuse the liberty requested, *at present.*"

May

May 29th. Our fare continues remarkably good; and, though our confinement be strict, and every attention paid to our safe custody, the conduct of our guards is perfectly correct, and that of the officers and keepers uniformly marked with discretion and civility.

August 4th. Our table excellent and improving. We have very fine Salmon twice or thrice a week, which are taken in our view, at the distance of about 150 yards. Of other fish, both round and flat, we have great variety. Our beef, mutton, Pork, Veal, lamb. &c. are remarkably good. Latterly, we have had plenty of garden stuffs and sallading, and sometimes young ducks and peas—yesterday and to day new potatoes. We have not wanted eggs and cold meat, at breakfast, a single day, since our arrival here. Our wine, porter, and ale, have been uniformly good. And, at supper, we have occasionally had very fine crabs and lobsters.*

* For a considerable time after our arrival, we never had fish at our table, though we saw them daily, in the Fort, in great variety and abundance. This produced a peevish note to Mrs. M'Gregor. This note was answered by information that, as fish was so plenty, and consequently cheap, that none but the common soldiers used them, she feared sending them to us would be attributed to selfishness or insolence. This will not surprise, when it is known, that the largest Cod are delivered, by the fishermen, at two shillings per dozen, to the houses where they are pickled &c. for the London market; and that fish, of every other kind, is proportionably cheap—Salmon excepted.

September 14th. This day added strength to the presumption that Irish influence, arising from Irish cabinet fears, is yet used with the British Minister, to intercept or abridge our comforts.

For some months, applications had been made and repeated, in vain, to the Irish Minister, that Mrs. Emmet might be permitted to visit Mr. Emmet; and communications holden with the Duke of Portland, for the same purpose. Notwithstanding the repeated refusals in Ireland, the Duke of Portland granted the boon, but under such restrictions, that it was honorably declined, as the following letter will shew.

" SIR,

Mrs. Emmet, wife of Mr. Emmet, one of the prisoners at Fort-George, has obtained my permission to see her husband; but, as she is suspected of having imbibed his principles, you will take particular care that she shall not be the means of communication between him and the disaffected in Ireland. She is only to see him in the presence of a proper person, and you are to take such steps as that she may not carry any letters or papers in or out of the Fort. I have the honor to be

Sir,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

PORTLAND."

The Hon.
Lieut.-Gov. STUART.

Though

Though the permission, granted in this letter, be entirely due to the Duke of Portland; I appeal to every man of common sense whether the restrictions are not evidently of Irish suggestion. Should a doubt exist, the fact will appear, hereafter, supported by evidence equal to demonstration: and, I ask, whether any one of them has ever known, read, or heard of, such insulting and barbarous restrictions being imposed on any human being, in such circumstances; much less on a lady of most respectable connexions, and dignified character—mother of five children, languishing to visit a beloved husband, an exile and prisoner, five hundred miles distant?*

October 5th. We had nice fresh Herrings, for some days past, in addition to our other fare. The price, to-day, as we are told, is *two pence* per hundred.

November 5th. This day supplied a sufficient proof of continued Irish control over our affairs, and a disposition to harass us and our friends. This, however, neither surprised, nor hurt us, so much as the unmerited insult offered to our worthy Governor in the following letter, the origin of which cannot be doubted.

" *Whitehall,*

* Supposing Mrs. Emmet to travel the same Highland roads that we did, her journey from Dublin to Fort-George would have been 503 English miles; by London, which was her route, 945.

" *Whitehall, October 31st*—1799.

SIR,

I am directed by the Duke of Portland to desire that you will acquaint the state prisoners under your care, that it will be proper for them to inform their correspondents in Ireland, that all letters addressed to them should be sent open, under cover, to the Secretary of the civil department in Dublin, who will forward them to this office, from whence they will be sent to you to be delivered to the prisoners. In the mean time, and until you receive such letters from this office, you will be pleased to transmit to his grace *such letters as shall arrive at Fort-George, for the said prisoners, before they are given to them.*

I have the honor to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient,
Humble Servant,
J. KING.

Endorsed, Duke of Portland
regarding the state prisoners'
Letters,
October 31st.—99"

The preceding was accompanied with the following note.

" *Fort-George, Nov. 5th.*—99.

" Lieut.-Governor Stuart is *somewhat* at a loss to account for the cause of the enclosed order, as he is *positive* no *improper* letters have been *attempted*

attempted to be sent to the state prisoners, since in his custody; but, that as little delay as possible may arise to their letters, the Lieut.-Governor desires the gentlemen may *immediately* write to their correspondents, in the terms of the secretary of state's orders, and their letters will be forwarded to the office directly.

To the state prisoners."

The preceding letter not only proves what I have already mentioned of still prevailing fears and suspicions, in the Irish cabinet, respecting us, and a mean distrust in Governor Stuart; but implies a want of confidence between the Irish and British secretaries, as our letters must pass through the offices of both. Our worthy Governor says that "*he is somewhat at a loss to account for the cause of the order &c.*" But, why at a loss? Because the good man was a stranger to the wretches with whom it originated.* Had he known their crimes and their cruelties, as admitted by themselves, he would have been at no loss to account for their fears and their precautions. I say, "admitted;" as their *bills of indemnity*

* Let it not be surmised that I mean to reflect on Mr. J. King, or connect him, or his Grace of Portland, with the wretches to whom I allude, on a supposition, that this order respecting our letters, or the preceding respecting Mrs. Emmet, originated with either. Whatever may be my opinion of his Grace, as a minister, I conceive of him as incapable of the meanness or malignity from which such orders must have originated. Nay, I pity him under the necessity, to which a *degrading ambition* has reduced him, of being pandar to the meanness and malignity of others.

indemnity,* while they have the force of laws to save them from the axe or the gallows, have likewise the force of self-sanctioned proclamations that they deserved the one, or the other, or both. But guilty or not guilty, why now afraid or cautious, in respect to us? Us!! twenty poor exiles, five hundred miles distant, immured in a strong Fort, surrounded by guards, deprived of freedom of speech, even at our meals, and obliged to write every line of our correspondence, in the presence, and with *the pen and ink*, of a keeper? This is the problem: and the only maxim, on which it can be solved is, that "guilt and fear are inseparable," even where the shadow of danger cannot be traced.

May 12th. 1800. From the last date until this day, nothing of great importance to us occurred, as coming from the Irish government. During this time, however, our good governor had been gradually procuring indulgences for us. Several restrictions were totally removed, and the others greatly

* In a preceding part of this Narrative, I have used, perhaps unfortunately, the words "apostate," "faction," intrigue," and "enormities;" and here, I have mentioned my idea of "Indemnity bills." Should my indiscretion, in respect to the former, expose me, *anew*, to suspicions of aiming at an "exercise of power beyond law," I hope I shall be permitted to take shelter under the shadow of the latter. And, in this, I am certain that all, *who know me*, will admit that nothing, *except necessity*, could drive me thither, as my soul must ever detest the company, with which I should, *there*, be obliged to associate.

greatly relaxed, on his unsolicited representations to the Duke of Portland. Not satisfied with this, he solicited, and obtained for us, additional privileges and comforts, of which the following exhibits an instance.

"*Fort-George, May 12th.* 1800,

"Lieut.-Governor Stuart, having stated to the Duke of Portland that he did not apprehend any inconvenience or risk could arise from the state prisoners having permission to bathe in the sea, under certain restrictions, his grace has thought proper to grant that indulgence. Such gentlemen, therefore, as wish to avail themselves of that permission will give in their names to serjeant Fletcher; and they will mention any three days in the week, (which days must continue unchanged) as will best suit them, as also the hour in the morning at which they would wish to bathe, as they must all bathe at the same time. The Lieut.-Governor hopes they will choose some hour before nine o'clock. Orders will be given to the guards accordingly—the place for bathing is on the North side of the Fort.

STUART, LIEUT.-GOV.

To the state prisoners.

On reading this note, equally marked with humanity and politeness, the Dublin prisoners could not help making some comparisons between the author, and, what they called, the "upstart

peerling, hireling clerks, and petulant coxcombs," by whom they had been insulted, and otherwise ill-treated. One of them put an end to these comparisons, by drily remarking that nothing need be said on the subject, but that "the Governor* was a gentleman by birth, education, and habits."

May 28th. The Governor told me, the other day, that he would have the privilege of bathing extended to every day except Sunday; and declared that the propriety of our conduct *commanded his esteem, and deserved his patronage.* Even now, our restraints are nearly done away. We have liberty of all each others apartments, and may amuse ourselves as we please, within the bounds prescribed, from eight in the morning, till nearly nine in the evening.

July 9th. Evening indulgence extended to ten o'clock.

19th. This day relieved us from great anxiety, by bringing a very large packet, as all letters to and from us had been stopped, in the Irish secretary's office, for more than a fortnight before. Though this new instance of cruelty irritated

* He is brother to the Earl of Murray, with whose family and connexions, every one, who has read the History of Scotland, must be acquainted.

irritated us very much, our irritation against the Irish shadow of the *heaven-born* minister was aggravated by a letter from Mrs. Emmet to her husband informing him that, after having renewed her applications at the castle of Dublin, and continued them in vain, *for nine months,* to be permitted to visit him, without *insulting restrictions,* she had applied personally to the Duke of Portland; that he immediately granted her permission not, only to visit, but, *with her children,* to come and reside with, him; and that she attributed this indulgence, principally, to the kind offices of Governor Stuart.

What a contrast do these things present! surely, it cannot henceforth be doubted that all our restraints and privations originate in Irish councils; and that our indulgences and comforts are in direct opposition to the will of the Irish minister and his accomplices.

August 10th. Notwithstanding the prevailing scarcity, and consequent high price, of provisions, our table continues, not only plentiful, but luxurious. Our dinners are excellent. We have had currant pies, caudled gooseberries, green peas, &c. frequently of late; and, what may seem more remarkable, apple-pies of the fruit of—99.

December 19th. As some of our number continue to bathe, the Governor has procured an extension of that privilege to every day of the week, that they may have it in their power to embrace every possible opportunity which the season shall admit.

January 7th. 1801. A note of this date, accidentally confirmed, by the Governor's own pen, what Dr. Roy formerly told me; viz. that, while the Irish restrictions continued, "he had frequently deviated from his instructions, *at his own peril.*"

June 23d. All our blankets, coverlets, curtains &c. scoured or washed; and new sheets &c. ordered wherever the old were torn, or tattered.

N. B. We have had clean bed-linen, regularly, once a fortnight.

June 30th. I forgot to mention that, early in the Summer, he procured, from the Duke of Portland, liberty for us to exercise in one of the outer appendages of the Fort, where the battlements are high enough for playing ball, or rackets. It has a delightful sward, and contains some acres, so that the young and active can indulge themselves in foot-ball, hurling, racing, leaping, &c. &c. &c. for six or seven hours, every day.

July 24th. New-potatoes; and several times, of late, very fine cauliflowers, &c.

For

For nearly two years, as must appear from what I have written, our situation has been becoming, gradually, less comfortless, through the persevering good offices of our revered Governor, and the indulgence of the Duke of Portland, since permitted to follow the dictates of his own mind. During the latter part of that time, we have enjoyed every accommodation, and every mean of health and comfort, which that situation could admit; nor have we labored under a single restraint which safe custody did not require.

On looking over my Journal, during the remainder of my stay at Fort-George, I do not find any thing that would not justify the same declaration. My transcribing it would cast no light on the subject of this Narrative, whatever additional lustre it might shed on Lieut.-Governor Stuart, by bringing into view his unremitting services to such as were invalids, and his brother-like attentions to Mrs. Emmet and her children, while inmates of the Fort. Yet, though nothing, materially affecting our external condition, took place, a correspondence with men, both *in* and *under* power, was instituted, and carried on, in the course of which, our minds, according to their various temperaments, were elevated, depressed, amused, provoked or terrified. As the communications, which excited this variety of feelings seemingly opposite and

and inconsistent, were at least equally so, I shall subjoin the purport of a few specimens, in the order of their dates, that the reader may be enabled to form some idea of them.*

In

* Though my specimens of communications do not commence before September 1801; yet, our affairs were subjects of ministerial discussion, at a much earlier period, the progress and results of which were, in general, made known to some of us, and gave rise to sensations, memorials &c. &c. However curious some of these were, I have passed them by, as I consider what follows as demonstrative of every thing worthy of the reader's notice.

However, on looking over my Journal, one occurrence presents itself, which I cannot refrain transcribing. As some of our rooms smoked, the Governor caused tall wooden tubes to be erected on the tops of our chimnies, soon after our arrival. These continued to be of great service to us, till the night between the 13th. and 14th. of March 1810. About midnight, we were roused by an alarm of fire. A flame from an adjoining funnel, had caught the tops of the tubes on our chimnies, and spread rapidly towards the great powder magazine, which was within fifty feet of us. The moment the alarm reached him, he rushed to our ward, ran to Emmet's apartments first to remove his apprehensions for himself and family, and then to every one of us, assuring us that there was no danger, as the magazine was proof against fire from without.

The fire being extinguished, we retired to rest. In the morning, while at breakfast we were honoured with a note which concluded thus; "I shall, however, order some masonry to be put on the top of those vents, which smoke most, to remedy as far as can be done, with safety, that inconvenience. But, as the weather will not now admit any thing to be done on the chimney-tops, I have to request that the gentlemen will be particularly

In September, An application for the release of Messrs. Tennent and Simms, by Mr. M'Naghten, member of parliament for the county of Antrim, was rejected. To a memorial, in favor of Cormick, it was officially answered, " that we are to have no liberation here *during the war.*

October 22d. A Mr. Shee, relative to Sir George Shee, Lord Pelham's secretary, writes to Mr. Tennent : " that Lord Pelham can do nothing relative to the prisoners at Fort-George —that their case must come before ministers— that he supposes their liberation will soon take place—

ticularly attentive to their fires at bed-time; though I do not think the fire of last night originated from any of the prison vents. I have the honor to be

Your obedient servant,
J. STUART, LIEUT.-GOV.

To the state prisoners.

The above was accompanied by the following.

The Lieut.-Governor's compliments to Mr. Emmet. He hopes Mrs. Emmet suffered no inconvenience from the alarm of fire, which was given last night. As the idea of being locked in may occasion a disagreeable sensation to a lady's mind, in case of any *sudden occurrence* (though the Lieut.-Governor flatters himself none will in future arise) he will give directions that the passage door, leading to Mr. Emmet's apartments, shall not in future be locked, being convinced, Mr. Emmet would make no improper use of all the doors being left open."

THOMAS A. EMMET, ESQ.

Blush ! Blush ! Irish Clerks, Sheriffs, Judges, Hangmen, blush ! ! !

place—that the secretary desired him to call *in a fortnight;* at which time, he hoped to be able to give him a favorable answer, in respect to Mr. Tennent at least."

October 26th. A. O'Connor had a letter from his brother, informing him "that he had been so fully assured of his immediate liberation, that he was preparing rooms for his reception, at his house."

November 2d. Brought the said Mr. O'Connor an official answer to a petition, merely for a removal to a London prison; "that, as soon as any arrangement was agreed on, it would be made known."

November 10th. A letter to Emmet, from the Lord chief Justice of Scotland, his early friend and fellow-student, informed him that "all his applications were fruitless, and his expectations vain, notwithstanding his warmest interference in his favor."

November 11th. Mr. Tennent was informed by his friend, that the result of a second interview with Sir George Shee was a declaration, "that government had not yet taken the case of the prisoners, at Fort-George, into consideration—that he supposed they would do so, *in a few* days—and that, as he had reason to think, *no attention would be paid to any particular applications, nor any exceptions made.*

November

November 13th. A. O'Connor was demi-officially informed, by his brother, "that nothing is expected to be determined, by government, in respect to the prisoners here, *till the definitive treaty of peace be signed.*"

November 22d. Messrs. Tennent and A. O'Connor had letters from their mediators, in London, saying "that our *immediate liberation is certain.*" R. O'Connor asserts positively, "that Tennent, Simms, Dowdall, Hunter and "I, are to be set afloat unconditionally."

25th. Chambers had a letter, from Sir George Shee, saying, "that no attention could be paid to any *personal* application, till some arrangements, now under consideration, should be made out."

26th. Simms had a letter, of the very same date, from his intercessor, assuring him, "that Lord Pelham had acceded to the liberation of *Tennent and him.*"

29th. A letter to Tennent announces "that the English government has *written to Lord Hardwicke*, expressing their *wish* to liberate him and Simms, and that an answer may be immediate; and that, if favorable, a messenger will be instantly dispatched to escort them to Ireland."

December 9th. During the last ten days all has been suspense and agitation. However, from the positiveness and precision of the letter

received by Simms, on the 28th. ult. though hardly reconcileable with that received by Tennent, three days later, hope was sometimes inflated, and imagination employed in her favorite Castlebuilding, till the arrival of this day's post; when all was compressed and overthrown by letters from Dublin, intimating "that measures of severity were to be continued, and the time of our imprisonment and exile prolonged." The information in these letters, however, was not *quite official*, as it rested only on the authority of what are called," *confidential people about the Castle.*"

Be that as it may, the eleven preceding documents, issued in as many weeks, may be justly considered as *official*; and on reading and comparing them, surprise and curiosity will be jointly excited —surprise! that such an heterogeneous mass of inconsistency and contradiction should have been permitted to issue from any ministerial office or any other, except that of a committee of Irish lords and commoners—curiosity to discover how this came to pass. A single fact is sufficient to remove the one, and satisfy the other. These documents were from clerks in the office of the British minister, who seem, frequently to have spoken or written, from their own opinion or surmise, rather than from his authority. And, as these may have varied with circumstances, their language would hold out prospects equally various.

various. Besides, their opinions and orders, as appears from a document respecting us, dated November 29th. as well as the reason assigned for depriving us of pen, and ink, May 6th. 1799, and the injunction to transmit our letters to the office of the Irish secretary October 31st. seem to have been occasionally influenced by Irish clerks, by whose presumption, prejudices, and passions, the understanding and will of the representative of Majesty in Ireland, were as completely subjugated, and trampled on, as the fortunes, liberty, and lives of the Irish people. To such a length was this contempt and insolence carried, that *memorials to his excellency were withholden from his sight, and answers given, in his name, without his knowledge.* And, when these answers were afterwards shewn him, he candidly owned " *that he could not alter them.*"

Of this fact, monstrous as it may appear, the following extract contains damning proof.*

" MY DR. BROTHER.

* * * * * After many applications to Mr. Montgomery, I found that your memorial had somehow been mislaid. I immediately had another drawn out, from a copy Mr. Maxwell

 had

* The original letter was put into my hands, by my fellow-prisoner, Mr. Tennent, two or three days after he received it, with permission to take a copy, which I then did most faithfully; and I have now made the above extract with equal fidelity.

had preserved, and delivered it myself to Mrs. Staples,* who gave it to Colonel Littlehales the Lord Lieutenant's secretary, with a recommendation of it to the attention of his excellency. In a day or two she received the following.

Dublin Castle, March 6th. 1801,

MADAM,

I have received my Lord Lieutenant's commands to acquaint you, that the memorial for Mr. Tennent's liberation *has been fully considered* by his Excellency. He has no doubt that your recommendation of it arises from a full conviction that his *pardon* would not be injurious to the public service; and he is *naturally* anxious to mark his attention to any request that engages your interference. At the same time, I am directed to acquaint you, that the circumstances, which have appeared to government, respecting Mr. Tennent's conduct, preclude his Excellency from any *mitigation of his sentence.*

I have the honor to be
madam your most obedient
and humble servant
EDWARD COOKE.

MRS. STAPLES.

* Lady of John Staples Esq. member of parliament for the county of Antrim.

On receiving the above, I waited on Lord Cornwallis, and, after a good deal of conversation on the subject, found that, *in fact, he had never seen the memorial—had neither been consulted on the contents of it, nor the answer which had been returned in his name:* and yet, when I shewed him the answer, he candidly avowed, that *he could not alter it;* and that *all he could do,* when similar applications were made him, *was to refer them to people, who, being longer in the country than himself, knew the peculiar circumstances of it better, and whether these circumstances admitted of the case being differently treated, &c. &c.*"

From this extract, the fact, which I have alleged can never be doubted, unless the original, from which it is drawn, including, as it does, Mr. Edward Cooke's *nonsensical** letter, be deemed an entire forgery. However, the very supposition of this implies such an excess of folly, impudence, and villainy, as can never be

* I have applied the epithet "nonsensical" to Mr. Secretary Cooke's letter. What softer epithet could I apply to a letter, which talks of "*pardon,*" and "*mitigation of sentence,*" in respect to a man, who was never *condemned, sentenced,* or even *tried,* for the supposed crimes, on the *imputation* of which he was suffering? As attributing such nonsense to his Excellency, I might have called it "superlatively impudent." And, if his Lordship spoke truth to Dr. Tennent, of which I cannot doubt, I might have pronounced it "a false and scandalous libel" on the representative of Majesty.

be reconciled with the idea of common sense; and much less, if possible, with the well-known character of Dr. Tennent, the writer. A man of understanding, prudence, truth and honor. I shall, therefore, proceed to take notice of another fact, which the same extract fully establishes: viz. That, in respect to Mr. Tennent's memorial, "Lord Cornwallis either spoke, or Mr. Edward Cooke wrote, a vile and abominable falsehood; or rather, a series of vile and abominable falsehoods."

Taking Dr. Tennent's letter, not only as genuine, but as worthy of unqualified credit, I shall now subjoin a farther extract, as it gives official certainty to some things, which I have formerly stated, only as *highly probable*, and, which from their nature, might have been doubted.

One of these is "the acknowledged insufficiency of the evidence against us;" or rather the total want of every thing which could be called evidence, or be received as such, by *any* court of *any* description. Another is, that while our privations and restraints originated invariably from the Irish cabinet of clerks, neither liberation, indulgence, nor any other comfort, can be traced to the same source.

He

He (Cooke) said "that he knew your character well, and had such testimonies of its dangerous nature as fully justified government in all they had done." This was coming to the point I wanted. "If you have such clear evidence, Sir, against my brother, why refuse his urgent and repeated applications to be allowed a trial in the courts established in this country, for similar offences? Or, on my application, will this opportunity be now granted him?" "O no: *the nature of the information against him will not admit of its being brought forward in a court of justice. It is sufficient to satisfy* US, *but not to convict* HIM." "Surely, Mr. Cooke, courts-martial, to which we are now so *fortunately* amenable, are not so extremely nice in admitting evidence, but that it is extremely probable, what is capable of weighing with government will be enough to convince them how eligible it is to punish an individual for the aggregate of a detailed criminality, although the detached parts should neither be very specific, nor very heinous, by themselves." "Well! but we cannot make our information public, for it may be from people *who do not wish to be known*;* and, if we should attempt to discover them,

* There is something very remarkable in this declaration of Mr. Edward Cooke, especially from the time, at which it was made. At an earlier period, it might have been suspected of truth. But, long before 1801, their principal informers had all been publicly made known, not only in the trials on which

them, it would effectually preclude our receiving any more from those hidden sources."

These words fully prove, not only the truth of the fact, " that there was nothing that could be wire-drawn or twisted into evidence, in the informations against us ;" but, in connexion with what preceded, that our liberty and lives were not in the hands of *law*, *justice*, the Lord Lieutenant, or government ; but in those of hireling understrappers, who, in contempt of the whole, and by the surreptitious use of his Excellency's name, were sporting with both, on the pretended credit of any miscreants whom malice may have prompted, influence overawed, or a bribe seduced, *under the secretarial assurance of secrecy and protection*, to swear them away. Nay, they prove still more. They prove that, though the same underlings, from *excess* of *delicacy*, refused *us* trial, on the information they boasted, because the *modest* people, from whom they had it, " *did not wish to be known*," yet the same *delicacy* did not prevent them

they had been produced, but by the reports of secret committees, and from many other sources, which had been successively opened during the preceding three years. Besides, all hunting after information, with a view to prosecutions, had been previously disclaimed by government. With what pretensions to credibility, then, could Mr. E. C. assign as a reason for refusing trial to Mr. Tennent, in 1801, that " an attempt to discover their informers, would preclude their receiving any more information from those hidden sources ?"

them from condemning us, without trial, to languish for THREE YEARS, SEVEN MONTHS, AND SEVEN DAYS, in confinement and exile, though they very well knew that there was not a man among us, who had ever expressed, or even entertained, a wish for either: and, at the same time, that our confinement and exile had already involved some of our families in deep distress.

The other fact, viz. "that every restraint imposed, but none of the indulgences granted, at Fort-George, originated in Ireland," rests likewise on stronger evidence than any yet *alleged against* US. It derives at least a respectable probability from the reason assigned for depriving us of pen and ink, May 6th. 1799; the order for transmitting our letters to the office of the Irish Secretary, October 31st.—and the document of the 29th. of Nov. 1801; in connexion with the first instructions sent to Fort-George, and the consequent strictness of our confinement. And this probability is raised, almost to certainty, by Mr. Edward Cooke's words to Dr. Tennent. "He said, that the Irish government had nothing to do in Roger O'Connor's liberation; and that it had not, *in the slightest degree*, interfered in it, either by recommendation, or otherwise." "He said also, that the expiration of the suspension bill was the *only* reason for liberating Lord Cloncurry

and the other state prisoners in England; and that his Majesty's illness had occasioned that unexpected predicament."

Now, surely, if Mr. Cooke *exculpates* the Irish government, i. e. the Irish clerks, from all concern in the liberation of R. O'Connor, though his life seemed to depend on it, no candid mind will *accuse* them, either of *ex*tending, or *in*tending, indulgence to us, who, thank God, were generally in pretty good health. And, should any *un*candid mind suspect them of any such intention, its suspicion must be dissipated by the following sentence. "He said that, if the English government were doubtful whether or no the Habeas Corpus Act extended to Scotland, they (the Irish government) would order you to Ireland, on the expiration of the bill for suspending that Act, until it could be again renewed, when you would be taken back to Fort-George; but, if they were sure that you could not take the benefit of the Habeas Corpus, you would remain where you are."

However little credit may seem due to the *unsupported* "sayings" of Mr. Edward Cooke, after the palpable falsehoods in his letter to Mrs. Staples, and of which he must stand convicted, if his Excellency spoke truth to Dr. Tennent, I am inclined to think that he may be believed here. The former part of his information

information derives *support* from the declaration of the very respectable Nicholas Magin, before mentioned; and the latter, *confirmation* from the fact that, during the prevailing anxiety for our *safety*, preparations were actually made, in Carrickfergus, for our *accommodation*, should we return; and soldiers, with a confidential officer, ordered thither, from Ballymena, for our *protection*.

There is something more in the language of these documents, which I cannot pass unnoticed. They declare "that no particular applications would be attended to, nor any exceptions made;" and speak of all the "deliberations, determinations, and arrangements," to be holden or made, as comprehending ALL the prisoners at Fort-George. The use of the phrase "particular applications" is strictly proper, as no *general* memorial or petition was ever sent to government, by the prisoners at Fort-George; and, that those, sent by individuals, were not attended to, so as to procure any peculiar favor to their authors, is evident from *my* being comprehended in the "*Act of Grace*" which set them free, though I had never made an application of any kind; unless my *challenging* and *provoking* trial, before my removal from Ireland, shall be deemed such.

Though the word " exceptions" be equally proper, yet, the reason of that propriety may not be generally known. The prisoners from Dublin, one excepted, had signed the fatal compact of 1798.

Fortunately, the signatures of the prisoners in Belfast were destroyed, *in the rage of Mr. Pollock*, as I have related. Consequently, they were unentangled in the acknowledgment of crime, imputed to the former. Hence, the non-subscribers in Fort-George sent a memorial to government, *in which I refused to join, as I had formerly done in respect to the compact*, stating that they were not comprehended in that compact, and praying liberation, on that account. To this memorial, the phrase " no exceptions" seems evidently to refer; and if so, the intention government, or the clerks, who usurped the powers of government, must then have been to consign all the prisoners to the same fate; and the end of their deliberations, to determine how that intention might be accomplished; though, as will soon appear, they afterwards relinquished this design, and made an exception, on the very ground of *signature*, and no *signature*.

If this be admitted, and admitted it must be, if the words of ministerial clerks be supposed to convey the same meaning, as when used by other men, liberation could not have been our intended

intended fate at that time. Had it been so, there could have been no occasion for *delay*, *deliberation*, or *arrangement*. Hence, as our lives were now out of the question, a presumption arises, that these deliberations were for the purpose of *discovering*, or *devising*, some *pretext* for transporting us with the Dublin prisoners, who had unguardedly signed their own banishment *for life*.*

It will here be recollected that when Mr. Pollock's paper was presented to me in Belfast, I refused to sign it on the suspicion that my so doing might be construed into an acknowledgment of crime; and that when my signature was afterwards eagerly sought for, in order to procure the *extension of mercy* to others, I persevered in my refusal, from an apprehension that *cruelty* not *kindness*, was intended; as, if the latter had been the case, it would not have been denied to those who signed, merely because I withheld my name.† These suspicions were consolidated into certainty, a few days afterwards, by a proclamation bearing date, "August 23d. 1798," and subscribed, "G. Nugent, Major General, commanding Northern district."

In

* This presumption seems to receive a strong confirmation from Mr. Cleland's exertions to have me driven out of Ireland, after my reportation from Fort-George, as will appear afterwards.

† For the writing, "I," and, "my name."

See Appendix No. I.

In this proclamation banishment for life is denominated "*his Majesty's pardon*;" and signing the compact, "*a title to an equal distribution of the King's merciful and gracious intentions*, and the *like measure of his Majesty's mercy*." Surely the guilt must have been heinous, and its acknowledgment considered as explicit and unequivocal, especially as no evidence was adduced to prove it, else such banishment could not be called a "*measure of mercy ! !*"

It is true there are crimes, under the conviction of which, it might be called a "*mitigation of punishment*," and consequently, a measure of mercy." But I conceive that no crime yet has been, or ever can be, committed, or even meditated, by *man* or *devil*, of which it can be called "*a pardon*." If it can, the language of a book, which we consider, not only as correct, but sacred, must be both nonsensical and deceptive. The banishment of the "old serpent, who is the *devil* and *satan*," from the realms of glory to a dreary region, there to be locked up in a gloomy cell, loaded with chains, and "tormented for ever and ever," was not the infliction of a punishment, but the concession of a "*pardon, which he had obtained :*" and permitting the "angels, which kept not their first estate," *to emigrate to hell*, "there to be reserved in chains of darkness, to the judgment of the great day," was allowing them "*a like distribution of gracious intentions*, and an *equal measure of mercy*."

I have,

I have, all along, called the paper, of which I am now writing, " a compact," though the word is not used in the General's proclamation. However, as he states that " his Excellency has been graciously pleased to accept of the said proposal;" viz. of the Dublin prisoners; and " has agreed to the terms thereby offered &c." I hope this proclaimed acceptance and argument fully justify the use of it; particularly, as he adds that said prisoners " had fulfilled the terms to be by them performed, and thereby obtained his Majesty's pardon."

Now, if this same paper be admitted as a compact—if the " *pardon*," and the " *measure of mercy*," which it implies, were withholden, for more than three years and an half, from those who, as General Nugent proclaims, *had* actually " *obtained it*"—if those, who " entitled themselves to an equal distribution of the King's *most merciful and gracious intentions*," by signing it in Belfast, and whose signatures Mr. Pollock had *outrageously* destroyed, were precluded the *benefits* of said distribution, for a like time—and, if they, in violation of this compact; and I, *who had never signed it*, against whom a *formal charge had never been prefered*, or, so far as I ever knew or heard, an *official warrant issued*, were not only condemned to languish in confinement, during that period, but dragged from prison to prison, from land to sea and sea to land, and latterly from one country to another, without

without any plausible pretext assigned, have I not reason to suspect, *nay, to believe and assert*, that the delays mentioned were to *procure*, and the deliberations to *devise*, matter of excuse for protracting, or extending, the "*measure of mercy*" which we had hitherto experienced? As to myself, I presume the following facts will supply, not only probable evidence, but direct proof, that this was the true state of the case.

During these deliberations, Mrs. Dickson and our two daughters resided in Newtown-Ards, the birth-place of Lord Viscount Castlereagh, and residence of the Rev. John Cleland, formerly *private tutor*, or rather *footman*, to his Lordship, and then as denominated by his late friends Merry and Newel, master of his croppy-hounds, pointers, and terriers.* With this office he held the agency of the Earl of Londonderry, and "that of Nicholas Price Esq. brother-in-law to Lady Londonderry, the *cure of souls*" in the Vicarage of Newtown-Ards and, as many alleged, by virtue

* I would not have it supposed, for a moment, that this designation of office originated with me. It was commonly used, in 1797, by Mr. Thomas Merry, surveyor of excise, who boasted of being one of his whippers in. Mr. Newell, another of Mr. Cleland's *confidential* friends, varies the phrase, *in his confessions*, and speaks of him, only as a d——d good *hunter, or huntsman*; I forget which. The appellation was so hackneyed, and in such variety of terms that it somehow or other caught the ear of Mr. Curran, and at the Spring assizes in Down, led him into such confusion of ideas, that, from his language, it is very uncertain whether he considered Mr. Cleland, as a *huntsman*, or a *bloodhound*—or *both*.

See Appendix No. 5.

virtue of this office, the keeping of some consciences. Thus robed in office, and vested with authority, sacred and profane, his influence owned no control; and access to the secrets, and secret places, of the town, was said to have been open to him. Of these places, the post-office was not the least likely to supply entertainment, or even the information yet hunted after at Newtown-Ards. The postmaster had long been a servant in the Stewart family—even for years before it had a Peer to boast of; and, from the known force of habit, may be supposed to feel and act as a servant still, not only to them, but to their accredited agent, political organ, and spiritual guide. Be this as it may, letters to my family were generally opened before delivery, except such as were franked by a Mr. Taylor* of the secretary's office, Dublin. That this was *done* in Newtown-Ards was taken for granted; and very plain hints were given Mrs. Dickson that Mr. Cleland was suspected to be the *doer*, as he was the only person, not under oath of office, who was indulged in the frequency and length of his visits there, as to have opportunities of opening and perusing letters.

However these insinuations many have been founded, or whoever may have been the agent in this vile business, its being done in Newtown-

* To this gentleman, the prisoners and their friends must ever feel particular obligations; as he not only enclosed, but franked all the letters from Fort-George, which came open to his office, and forwarded them immediately.

Ards turned out to be matter of certainty. Mrs. Dickson, wrote to Lord Castlereagh on the subject, after which the offence was never repeated. Now, as this vile business was carried on, at the very time of the forementioned deliberations and delays, is it not highly probable that its object must have been what I have alleged.*

Omitting

* "Conscious that your Lordship considers me and my concerns totally beneath your notice, I should not have dared to obtrude, either myself or them, on your Lordship's attention, did I not suppose that your humanity must attach you to the interest of an old, perhaps faithful, domestic of your father's house—one whom I do not wish to hurt, else I should have taken a more certain method of obtaining redress.

Since my coming to this place, my letters have been opened —both those which I have written, and those I have received— and I am certain that some, which were not opened, have been detained, perhaps for the inspection which was not dared to be given them.

As I have before said, I do not wish to hurt Trevor, for thus improperly gratifying the meanness and impertinent curiosity of a *low-minded* individual. I wish your Lordship would take the trouble of signifying to him the impropriety and danger of persevering in this practice; otherwise I shall be under the disagreeable necessity of exhibiting a formal complaint against him, which, *I have good reason to say, will be strengthened by others.* If through your Lordship's goodness, I shall be the means of saving the poor old man from injury, it will give me real pleasure. I shall now no farther trouble your Lordship than by subscribing myself

Your Lordship's most obedient humble servant,

Is. Dickson."

Newtown-Ards,
December 11th. 1801,
Right hon. Lord Viscount Castlereagh,
Dublin-Castle.

Omitting a variety of vile circumstances, equally symptomatic of meanness and malignity, such as listening at windows, tampering with dependents, &c. &c. I shall subjoin only one transaction, which carries in it the fullest proof of that gratuitous malice, which continued to seek the destruction of me and my family, even after my *unsolicited* release, honorable convoy, and happy return, as I vainly thought, to the bosom of my friends and my country—A release and convoy, which carried, in their very face, the fullest and fairest acquittal, not only from every charge, but even suspicion, of criminality.

My reportation, as I have already mentioned, was in January, 1802. In the Spring of that year, a David Thomson, who had been proscribed by proclamation, and obliged to make his escape in 1798, after years of distress on the continent, had returned secretly to Ireland. As he could not appear with safety, much less follow any business, he applied to Mr. Cleland, through a Mr. John Cogheran, for his interest with Lord Castlereagh and Mr. Price, to procure that safety and indulgence. Mr. Cleland received the application with great good-nature; expressed sorrow for Thomson's sufferings, on account of his youth and inexperience. He added, that he wished him well, would be glad to see him, and would candidly give him his advice. He took care, however, to hint that

there were men farther advanced in life, and of more experience, who had been active in leading young men, such as Thomson, to their ruin.

To these wishes, professions, and hints, Mr. Cogheran replied "that, as the proclamation was still in force, Thomson might be afraid to call on him; and, if any information respecting other people was expected, he was certain that he would neither see him, nor purchase his liberty by giving such information. Mr. Cleland declared, *upon his honor*, that he would neither detain him, nor require any such information.

This being reported to Thomson, he, after consulting with some friends, waited on Mr. Cleland, in Newtown-Ards, in the Summer of 1802. On his name being announced, he was immediately admitted, and, door and windows being carefully shut, a conversation was introduced by the expression of regret for his sufferings, the bad counsel which had led him to incur them, and particularly that of his own Clergyman Thomas L. Birch, and Dr. Dickson who had long preached politics instead of the gospel.

To this Thomson replied "that he had neither the one nor the other to blame—that all his actions were voluntary—and that he was initiated in the united system, for years before he had the slightest acquaintance with Dr. Dickson."

On

On this Mr. Cleland asked him: "were you not one of a deputation, from the county of Down committee who gave the Doctor a *high appointment*, at Killinchy fair?" On this Thomson got up, said the conditions settled with his friend Cogheran were violated, and begged leave to withdraw.

Mr. Cleland apologised, assured him the question arose *merely from curiosity*, and so earnestly entreated Thomson to sit down, that he complied. A long conversation ensued, in which Mr. Cleland complimented the abilities, information, and spirit, of Thomson; and declared that he would rather have twenty such men, as his *body guards*, than a thousand ruffians.

Again, however, Dr. Dickson's name was introduced, and followed by more questions. Thomson assured Mr. Cleland, that he would answer no questions, except what respected himself; reminded him that his object was to obtain his interest in procuring permission to reside safely in the country; and that, as all informations and examinations were in the hands of Mr. Price and him, requested his interference with Lord Castlereagh, Mr. Price, and government, for that indulgence.

After many manœuvres for the attainment of something gratifying to Mr. Cleland, this interview closed by his pledging himself to interfere in

in behalf of Thomson—an interdict forbidding Thomson to let it be known that he had seen him, or was under his protection—and, an injunction to *keep close*, till application could be made to Mr. Price, the result of which should be made known to him through his friend Mr. Cogheran.

This brings us, at last, to the catastrophe of this *plotted* drama. The Rev. Mr. Cleland met Mr. Cogheran next day, but without having seen Mr. Price ; extolled Thomson high as panegyric could raise him, adding " that Dr. Dickson was a very dangerous man"—desiring him to tell Thomson " *that he might have his liberty on giving such information,* PRIVATELY, *as with due management, might enable* THEM *to frighten Dr. Dickson out of the country ?*—and, at the same time, pledging *his* HONOR, " *that such information should be so managed that Thomson would never be exposed.*"

On the communication of this message, Thomson spurned the idea with indignation, and returned an answer bidding defiance to Mr. Cleland &c. &c. Be the cause what it may, it has been thought expedient to take no farther notice of this vile business, or of *Thomson,* though he never affected concealment afterwards. Hence he has hitherto been, and now is, living in peace, competence, and comfort, promoting the

the interests of society by an active industry; and almost as much respected, on his humble floor, as the Reverend John Cleland, now Rector of Killevey, and Præcentor of Armagh, on the *sacred boards*, to which the temporary *all-disposing* power of his *pupil-lord* has raised him; or any other boards, on which his *well-earned offices* and *honors* have yet* entitled him, either to expose himself, or be exposed.

From these transactions, in connexion, with many preceding parts of this narrative, I trust that every allegation, which I have made, is sufficiently supported; and that, however incompetent the information procured against me might be to my conviction, the Irish minister, his huntsman, or those hunting under him, had no neglect to mourn over, in their exertions to render it otherwise. I flatter myself, also, that the inconsistencies of the documents quoted is satisfactorily accounted for, as the successive answers, to memorials &c. from the British office, must have taken their complexion from

* I say "yet," because, at the time of the transactions mentioned, the see of Elphin was talked of, which would have placed his reverence in a more distinguished situation, *for his exposure* than he has yet reached. I hope it never will be said of him:

"That *he* was a Bishop, and *he* had a mitre,
Surmounted with jewels of sulphur and nitre."

from the successive reports and orders of the Irish *sportsmen*, founded on the respective success of their *pointers*, and *terriers*.

Taking all this for granted, I shall now return to the preceding documents, on reviewing which, in connexion with what I have above stated, it must be taken for granted also, that our liberation was far distant, unless death should kindly step in to release us, and take us in mercy to his cold bosom. But all reasonings and conclusions, respecting events dependent on the caprice of men, or ministers, are unsubstantial as the presumptions of shadowy conjecture. Such was the fact on the present occasion. The official declaration from London "that no exceptions" would take place; nor any liberations during the war;" and the demi-official information from Dublin, received December 9th. "that the term of our imprisonment and exile was to be prolonged," were effectually refuted on the evening of the next day, December 10th. by the arrival of our old friend, Sylvester, to carry off five—*the identical five—who were not implicated in the Dublin compact.*

As his arrival was late, we had little conversation with him till next day; when he informed us of the following particulars, some of which seem difficult to account for.

1st. That

1st. That, by his first instructions, he was enjoined to take us, under a military escort, from Fort-George to Greenock; and that, *on his remonstrance*, this injunction was modified into an order, to the commander in chief in Scotland, and another to the Lieut.-Governor of Fort-George, to grant him such, *if by him required.*

2dly. That a cutter had been dispatched, from Portsmouth or Plymouth, to the Irish station off Cork, with orders for a sloop of war to proceed to Greenock for our reception, and conveyance to Ireland.

3dly, That he was ordered not to remove us from Fort-George, until he was informed of the arrival of said sloop of war at Greenock. And,

4thly. That, notwithstanding all these precautions, and all the trouble and expence attending them, we were to be franked home, and that our accommodations and entertainment, during our journey and voyage, were entirely left to his discretion.

Such was the kindness of this man, that, before he called on us, on the day after his arrival, he waited on the Governor, gave him a receipt for our *bodies*, and took us under his own care. Having done this, he told us that, until he should be informed of the sloop's arrival, we should be at liberty to visit the neighbouring

towns, or make excursions to such parts of the country as we might choose, and the weather admit. Of this humane and generous indulgence we availed ourselves as much as possible, sometimes in his company, and sometimes with one of our former guardians, for 20 days, equally to our amusement, and the advantage of our health and spirits.

December 30th. Informed us of the arrival of the Hazard sloop of war, Captain Butterfield, at Greenock. This set us all to packing up, and three chaises were ordered from Inverness, contrary to the remonstrances of our worthy Governor, who, from his knowledge of inland Highland Winters, and the depth of the snow near us, assured us that we were in danger of being delayed for weeks, should we attempt to cross the country. However, as the ship was in waiting, it was resolved to take the road round the whole northern shore, though it extended our journey to 328 miles. In this route we did not meet with much delay, though frequently, we were obliged to walk for several miles, and sometimes exposed to imminent danger, in driving along shelving banks sheeted with ice. We had one upset without hurt or damage, and one overturn, in which a chaise was shivered nearly to pieces, but we happily escaped with a few slight bruises. The weather during our whole journey, two days excepted,

was

was very severe; but the warmth of our chaises, the goodness of our accommodations, and the generous fare with which Sylvester uniformly had our table covered, enabled us to bid it defiance.

As the shortness of the day obliged us generally to travel after dark, we had few visitants at the places where we slept. One, however, we had, which presented two such traits of the character of *Scottish* gentlemen, that I cannot pass it unrecorded. In the town of Brechin, about 70 miles N. E. of Edinburgh, we were waited on, soon after our dinner, by a deputation, from a numerous party then in the inn, requesting the pleasure of our company during the evening. This we declined, through delicacy to Mr. Sylvester. One of the gentlemen, having reported this to the company, soon after returned with a second message that they would stay in town if we would dine with them next day; which they hoped we would do, as the chaises belonging to the inn were all out, and our horses so fatigued that they would not be able to proceed, on account of the deep snow on the roads. An answer being returned that our situation obliged us to decline this favor also, the three gentlemen deputed were prevailed on to remain a few hours with us, which rendered our evening truly pleasant.

This hospitality and marked attention, *to such outcasts as we had been*, forms the first trait, to which I have alluded. The second will appear from the account, which these gentlemen gave us of the society, of which they were members, and the design of their meetings. This was, that they were 27 in number—that they had instituted a library, by subscription, consisting of books on agriculture, and the various branches of manufacture—that they met, eleven times in the year, to order, and issue, books for the use of their respective tenants, and the twelfth, on the anniversary of their formation, to settle their accounts, and enjoy a festive day; or as one of them said, "to get drunk together." N. B. The day of our arrival there was that of their anniversary.

I hope I shall be excused for inserting this anecdote, as it not only accounts for the extension and improvement of manufactures in Scotland, and the amazing progress of its agriculture, in despite of its rugged soil and inhospitable climate; but holds out an example, by the imitation of which, by our nobility and gentry, under any commonsensical government, poor, neglected, despised, insulted, and oppressed Ireland might be rendered the most productive and valuable islet which the ocean encircles.

January

January 9th. In the evening, we reached Greenock, in good spirits and perfect safety; and, next day at noon, were carried aboard the Hazard by Captain Butterfield, by whom we were politely treated, and hospitably entertained till the evening of the 12th. when, after a pleasant passage, he landed us near Hollywood, and escorted us to the house of Sir James Bristow, who received us with great civility, and accommodated us with carriages, for ourselves and luggage, to Belfast. On our arrival about 9 o'clock, we were waited on by the sovereign of the town, and the town-Major, who seemed to think that we were to become their wards, at least, till we should enter into recognizance. Mr. Sylvester thought otherwise; and as the room was soon crowded with our friends and relatives, he seemed overpowered with the tenderness of the scene, and requested we might hasten to the embrace of our families, who must be expecting us with throbbing hearts: adding, "gentlemen, I'll expect the pleasure of your company here to breakfast, at ten o'clock." Then, turning to the Sovereign and Major Fox, he told them, that he would be glad to see them, next day, at any hour convenient for them, that bail, if thought necessary, might be taken, and his wards liberated. We retired, and, on the succeeding morning, returned to our friend. The Magistrates attended about eleven o'clock; our recognizance was taken, and we, William Tennent,

Tennent, Robert Simms, Robert Hunter, William Dowdall, and William Steel Dickson, were once more restored to the liberty of breathing the air, and treading the soil, of our native land, which we had left, less than three years before, an independent kingdom, with a national legislature; and a rising trade, but found a dependent province, and its five millions of inhabitants sold, at their own expense, to a foreign government, by a parricidal combination of weak and wicked miscreants, to whom, under the name of representatives, she had entrusted the guardianship of the rights, fortunes, liberty, and lives of her people; and who reserved for her, as her only remaining privilege, a power to transport one hundred accomplices once a year, to assist the servants of her haughty mistress, in multiplying her own oppressions, aggravating her distresses, completing her degradation, and accelerating her ruin.

AS

THE NARRATIVE

OF

MY CONFINEMENT AND EXILE

TERMINATES HERE,

I shall once more pause, and request my readers, not only to review it with attention, but to weigh it, with impartiality, in all its parts. On such review, some things may, at first, appear digressive; but, I flatter myself, they will be found to bear directly on the objects principally in view—the pains and penalties inflicted on me and some others, merely on suspicion, *not evidence,* of guilt; or rather, on calumnies procured by purchase, or dictated by terror, to gratify personal resentment, screen political depravity, or escape punishment.

Some others may seem out of place, because not related in the order in which they occurred. This departure from order, I hope, will be excused from the consideration, that it brings a variety of circumstances and transactions, relating to the same persons, but occuring at different times, and in different places, into one point of view, and thereby enables the reader to see them more clearly, and judge of them more correctly, than otherwise he could do.

In

In all that I have written, I have generally mentioned my treatment, as a prisoner and exile, in common with that of others. However, though our treatment was the same, our circumstances, as to age, health, wealth, and tender connexions, were widely different. Some of us were young and healthy; others advanced in years, or delicate in constitution: some possessed liberal fortunes, which admitted of expence, and temporary privations; some had large capitals in business which continued productive in the hands of their connexions; others were in very limited circumstances, or dependent on professions, the emoluments of which ceased with their privation of office: again, some were unencumbered with the cares of family; while others had to regret the distresses of wives and children deprived of the means, not only of competence and comfort, but nearly of subsistence. Others still, by the visitations of providence, had to mourn the death of relatives, near and dear to their hearts, with whom, in their last moments, they were debarred from intercourse, and even the possibility of affording relief, or administering consolation. From this variety of circumstance and connexion, our variety of suffering, both in body and mind, must have been equally great. Yet, God knows, during our long seclusion from every foreign good, and under the inflictions which we suffered, the best circumstanced among us found his

his sufferings nearly equal to his patience, and the burthen of his feelings almost as great as he could bear.

In the greater part of these misfortunes and sufferings it was my lot to be involved. I was in my fifty third year, when torn from my family, and deprived of my freedom. Latterly, I had suffered much from bilious attacks. With rheumatism, I had been so long and severely afflicted, that I had been obliged to wear flannel next my skin, from my knees to my wrists, for upwards of twenty years, previous to my arrest. Before the end of my second week in confinement, the prevalence of vermin among the poorer prisoners in the prevost, obliged me to throw it aside; though, in the opinion of an eminent Physician, at the hazard of my life. Yet, thank God, I did not suffer any sensible injury from the change. An indignant feeling, arising from the treatment I was receiving, had invigorated my mind, and, perhaps, by a well-known sympathy, braced my bodily system—I was the husband of a justly beloved wife, who was born of a genteel family, brought up in affluence, and *liberally* educated; but, who, for several years, had been seldom able to dress or undress herself. Yet, thank God, she continued capable of presiding over the education of our two daughters. Besides these daughters I was father of four sons. One of these had finished

his education, and, as already mentioned, was serving his Majesty, as a surgeon in the navy, whilst I was languishing in an Irish prison, under the anathema of the Irish clerk of the representative of his Majesty in Ireland. Happily, I had gotten a second son placed in an eminent mercantile house, as an apprentice; and the other two I was educating, for learned professions, or business, as circumstances, inclination, or opportunity might determine; in all the fondness of a father's hope, that they would be useful members of society. For the support and education of this family, my income was in all, about £270 per ann. only £25 of which was independent of my offices as a Presbyterian Minister, and master of a small academy.

From the number of my family, the extent of my connexions, and the expense to which I was exposed by circumstances which I have related, it was not in my power to save money, and my arrest put a complete stop to my earnings. My congregation, it is true, continued my stipend for about seventeen months. Yet, withal, such were the expenses to which I and my family were exposed, while I was prisoner in Ireland, that ere my confinement had half expired, every shilling I could call my own, was expended, and my family reduced to dependence on the above mentioned £25 per ann. a very small precarious annuity; and what my

son

son could spare from his income as a Surgeon. And even these scanty resources were greatly diminished, before relief presented itself from any other quarter.

The first of these Diminutions arose from the ingratitude and villainy of one of my own tenants—a Hugh Hastings—whom I had been nursing up from beggary to independence, for sixteen years. Being master of a good horse, he got himself enrolled in Lord Londonderry's yeomen cavalry. This effected, he not only refused to pay his proportion of rent, but, with sabre in hand, threatened the other tenants with vengeance, if they would dare to pay theirs to *Rebels:* and, for doing so, he impudently asserted the authority, and boasted the protection, of Lords Londonderry and Castlereagh. This fact as far as relates to Hastings, is true in all its parts. But, as his conduct proves him to be a villain, his charge against their Lordships must be a vile falsehood. No man, in his senses, can suppose that either could be capable of such unparalleled meanness and malice. The fact itself, however, is a glaring instance of the impudence of scoundrels in the abuse of great names, and the enormities of which they are guilty under the pretext of their authority.

A second and more affecting diminution of their means of support was the death of my son,

who was in the navy. Had this event affected only the external circumstances of the family, it would scarcely have been regretted. Or, had it stood alone, good sense, heartfelt religion, and the lenient hand of time, with the blesssing of God, would have gradually obliterated the impressions, which it made, and soothed the sorrows, which it excited, But, preceded, as it had been, by the death of *my* father, and that of Mrs. Dickson's *only* brother; and succeeded, as it soon was, by those of *her* father and her *only* sister, the affliction of my family must have been great, indeed; and their situation melancholy, destitute as they then were, of father, husband, earthly guardian, or protector. And, surely, the heart must be a total stranger in the school of adversity, and equally so to the feelings of our nature, which can suppose my sensibilities untouched, or my soul unwrung, prisoner and exile as I was, far removed beyond the possibility, either of relieving their distresses by resuming my functions, or their hearts by mingling the expressions of my sorrow with theirs.

Having thus recited the principal circumstances of a confinement and exile, long in their duration variegated in their modes, and, to me, ruinous in their effects; I shall now advert to the evidence, on which government, and those who acted

acted under its authority, or rather usurped and exercised its powers, seem to have founded *their* proceedings, and inflicted *my* sufferings.

That the evidence against us, Northern prisoners, in mass, was not only defective, but unworthy of the name, I have already shewn, by a variety of circumstances. To these however, another may be added, of the same complexion. That is, that, in July 1798—*the awful month of terror, rage*, and *blood*—they were repeatedly served with notice of trial, and even cited before a court-martial then daily sitting; and, as repeatedly, reconducted to their prison, without having proceedings of any kind instituted against them.

In respect to me, the vile means used to procure information, not only to the last hour of my confinement, but for many months after my release, amount, nearly to a demonstration of the same fact. Nay, my liberation itself, in such circumstances, demonstrates more. It demonstrates that evidence sufficient to satisfy either jury, or court-martial could not possibly be procured, or created, and carries, in its bosom, an acquittal as fair, full, and honorable, on the part of government, as ever man enjoyed.

Of the actual information received respecting me, or the foundation which it might lay for the

the severities under which I was laboring, I had no knowledge, during my confinement; except from reports, equally vague and inconsistent. However, about a year after my return from Fort-George, after much enquiry, and some trouble, I procured a part of the report of the secret committee of the house of Lords, containing 90 pages, in folio. On finding that this contained, at large, the informations of John Hughes, formerly mentioned, I was highly gratified; and, on reading the part, relative to myself, not less surprised.

As this precious record, I believe, has not been in general circulation—and, as the cause of my surprise may, therefore, be unknown—I shall transcribe what relates to me, as delivered on oath, August 3d. 1798. It is, literally, as follows:

" He has known the Reverend Steel Dickson of Portaferry these two years intimately—saw him at the assizes of Antrim and Down at lent assizes 1797. He saw him acting with Lowry, Turner and Teeling as one of the committee for the conducting the prisoner's defence—Nicholas Magin called on him with a message from Doctor Dickson, that Dickson was going to Ballynahinch to remain there till Tuesday, and that he would be at Mr. Pottinger's till seven o'clock of that evening. Dickson called

upon

upon him Friday the first of June at his house in Belfast, and told him that the Colonels of the united regiments in the county of Down had had a meeting in a field, on the day before, as Mr. Magin had stated; that twenty three of them had agreed to fight and commence the rebellion, provided the county of Antrim and the other counties of Ulster, as he believes, would act with them, and as he (Dickson) knew there was to have been a meeting of the Colonels of the county of Antrim that day, (viz. the first of June) Dickson wished to know whether he had heard any thing from it—he said he had not heard of the meeting—he knew there was to be such a meeting—Hunter told him so---Dickson said he would go out to Mr. Pottinger's that evening, and requested he would send him intelligence of what should be done in the Antrim meeting; that he would go from Mr. Pottinger's to Ballee, where he was to preach on Sunday; from thence he would go to Ballinahinch and remain there till Wednesday.

On the Sunday, Mr. Keane, of Finlay's bank, came from Dublin, and asked him where Dr. Dickson was---he told him he would find him at Ballinahinch---Keane went there on Monday, as he believes.

On Friday the 1st. of June, Dickson told him that he was one of the Adjutant Generals of the united

united Irishmen's forces in the county of Down, and that he (Dickson) would go to Ballinahinch and remain there till Wednesday, as it was a central place, from which he could issue his orders to his officers---Dickson told him that the reason why he would remain at Ballinahinch till Wednesday was, that the Antrim Colonels had adjourned till the Tuesday, and that he could receive their determination in Ballinahinch on Wednesday."

Though the inconsistency, self-contradiction, and insignificance, of this solemn memoir, must appear, at once, to every man of sense who reads it, a few observations may not be unnecessary, for the use of the inattentive, or the credulous: and, in these, I shall endeavour to follow the order of the text.

1st. Then: " has known Dickson for two years intimately---saw him at the lent assizes of Antrim and Down, acting with Lowry, Turner, and Teeling, as one of the committee for the conducting the prisoner's defence."

That I was at the Spring assizes, in both places, and the Summer assizes in Down, I have already stated; and the *active* part, which I took, in behalf of five of the prisoners in Down, I have acknowledged and detailed. But I positively deny that I had any connexion with Lowry,

Lowry, Turner, and Teeling, as " one of the committee for the conducting the prisoner's defence ;" though I was frequently in their company.

I also deny that Hughes could possibly see me *with them*, at the lent assizes for Antrim, as he asserts; no one of them having been there, at that time so far as I know.* Nor was I there, as member of any committee, or for any general purpose of prisoner's defence. The cause of my attendance was well and extensively known ; and my justification requires that the knowledge of it should not be lost. Be it known then, that some young men, very respectably connected in Belfast, were to be tried on charges affecting their lives. The principal evidence, on which their conviction was *hoped* and *feared*, was that of the notorious and celebrated BELL MARTIN. She had grown up, almost from a child, under my eye, in Portaferry. Her family was very poor, partly from her mother's decrepitude and long confinement to bed. The respectable families of the town and neighbourhood were well disposed to assist them; and Bell was encouraged to call on them occasionally for milk, cold meat, and other little comforts.

 This

* Lowry, Turner, and Teeling might have been at these assizes, unknown to me, as I was not then acquainted with one or other of the three. My first introduction to them, or any of them, was, at Downpatrick, on the following week.

This she continued to do, till she became nearly a woman; though, latterly, she was so addicted to *lying* and *theft*, that she was seldom admitted farther than the hall, wherever she called. Unfortunately for her, she grew up with a handsome face and good person. These exposed her to temptations, to resist which she proved deficient, either in wisdom, or in will. These circumstances had become known in Belfast, where she had resided for a considerable time, previous to her information against the young men alluded to. Hence, not only Mr. James M'Clary, a respectable merchant in Portaferry, in whose work her father had been long employed, and I, to whom the poor family had ever looked as a guardian, but *Lord Viscount Castlereagh*, and the *Rev. John Cleland*, who had, for years, lived in the neighbourhood. were summoned to appear at Carrickfergus, *in order to impeach her character*. In consequence we all did appear, and were detained there, during a whole week, to no purpose. The lady, though kept under a military guard, contrived, or was permitted *by connivance*, to make her escape, on the night previous to the intended trial, and there was no prosecution.

However romantic the preceding paragraph may appear, it is strictly true. The Peers and Plebeians, whom I have mentioned, Mr. M'Clary excepted, are still living, and can attest its truth

May

May I not then ask with confidence, " why did Mr. Hughes, in his examinations, introduce my name exclusively ?" Surely, whether praise or blame may attach to *me, on this occasion at least,* the Earl of Londonderry, Lord Castlereagh, the Rev. John Cleland, and Mr. M'Clary, were entitled to a participation, for aught that has yet appeared to the contrary.*

The next item, in the report of the examination of Hughes, contains only an alleged message, on the 1st. of June 1798, from Dickson, by a Mr. Magin, informing him " that Dickson was going to Ballynahinch to remain there till Tuesday, and that he would be at Mr. Pottinger's till seven o'clock of that evening."

Of this message, considered in itself, nothing can be said, but that it is perfectly unmeaning, as it neither points out object to be obtained, nor end to be accomplished, by the little information, which it supplies.

However, it deserves some attention, from what Mr. Hughes swore; according to the next

 sentence

* Though I neglected the mention of the Earl of Londonderry, in a preceding paragraph, he also was summoned to Carrickfergus, to give a character of Bell Martin, and attended there during the assizes; though I am convinced, he was equally a stranger to her *person* and her *name,* till the latter met his eye, in the summons with which he was served.

sentence of the report before me. " Dickson called upon him (Hughes) Friday the first of June at his house in Belfast, and told him that the Colonels of the united regiments of the county of Down had had a meeting in a field on the day before, *as Mr. Magin had stated*, that twenty three of them had agreed to fight and commence the rebellion, provided the county of Antrim, and the other counties of Ulster, as he believes, would act with them."

The information, contained in this long sentence, is attributed to Dr. Dickson with a reference to a supposed previous statement by Mr. Magin, *perfectly coincident*. Dr. Dickson's information to Mr. Hughes, he swears to have been on the first of June. Mr. Magin's *statement* must have been on the same day, as both connect the meeting spoken of with the day immediately preceding.

Now what is the amount of all this? On what foundation does it rest its claims to credit? Neither Dr. Dickson nor Mr. Magin are made to speak from *knowledge*. But, supposing they had spoken from knowledge, what did they say? " A meeting of Colonels had taken place in a field." Where was that field? In what barony or parish? No matter. " Twenty three of these Colonels agreed to fight &c. &c." without regard to the authority or approbation, of any superior officer—

officer—any Adjutant General or Commander in chief—"provided the county of Antrim, and the other counties of Ulster, would act with them." This is all that can possibly be learned directly from the preceding information. It inculpates no man, by name; nor does it even insinuate that any man, of a rank superior to that of Colonel, was concerned with, or recognized by, the field-meeting of which it speaks. With respect to Dr. Dickson, it leads to no inference, but that he was employed in sending messages without meaning, and telling silly stories to no purpose. However the succeeding short paragraph, in some measure, wipes off that reproach. It runs, as follows:

"As he (Dickson) knew there was to have been a meeting of the Colonels of the county of Antrim that day," (viz. the first of June) Dickson wished to know whether he had heard any thing *from* it—he said he had not heard *of* the meeting---he knew there was to be such a meeting---Hunter had told him so."

From this it appears, that Dr. Dickson *had* some end in view; and that his end was to procure information *from* a meeting of Colonels of the county of Antrim, in return for what he had communicated from the county of Down. "Dickson wished to know whether he (Hughes) had heard any thing *from* the meeting &c. &c."

Mark

Mark what follows!---" He said he had not heard (not *from*, but) *of* the meeting." And then immediately said farther, " he knew there was to be such a meeting---Hunter told him so." Are these " saids" reconcileable? Or are they not flat contradictions to each other? Yet to these " saids," as the very " saids" uttered by John Hughes to Dr. Dickson, said John Hughes positively swore, before the secret committee of Irish Lords, as appears by their printed report.

The succeeding sentence goes to shew that Dr. Dickson was exceedingly anxious to procure intelligence from the meeting of Antrim Colonels, and determined not to leave the neighbourhood of Belfast without it. " Dickson said he would go out to Mr. Pottinger's and requested he would send him intelligence of what should be done in the Antrim meeting; that he would go from Mr. Pottinger's to Ballee, where he was to preach on Sunday; from thence he would go to Ballynahinch and remain there till Wednesday."

On this sentence my remark shall be very short. 1st. Dr. Dickson's supposed message by Mr. Magin limits his intended stay at Ballynahinch to *Tuesday;* whereas his words to Mr. Hughes, though evidently spoken, at latest, a very few hours afterwards, perhaps not one, according to the report of the committee, extend it to *Wednesday*. 2dly. The message does not even

even hint that Dr. Dickson intended to be in Belfast, on that day, but as being at Mr. Pottinger's, and about *to be there until seven o'clock in the evening.* Mr. Hughes speaks of him as *being in Belfast,* whence he proposed going to Mr. Pottinger's *in the evening.* These, however, are inconsistencies so trivial as scarcely to deserve notice. But this same sentence contains a circumstance of another kind, and which will soon appear to be of some importance. This is, " A request that intelligence of what should be done in the Antrim meeting might be sent after him to Mr. Pottinger's, *whence he was to proceed to Ballee.*" Of this request nothing shall be observed at present, only that *with it* the supposed interview between Dr. Dickson and Mr. Hughes must have terminated; and all Mr. Hughes's matter of information respecting the Doctor must have then terminated likewise, as no succeeding communication between them, by conversation, message, or epistle, is even hinted at.

That this was the case appears from the episode which follows, and of which the reader will form his own opinion. " On the Sunday, Mr. Keane, of Finlay's bank, came from Dublin, and asked him " *where Dr. Dickson was* ?"—He told him he would find him at Ballynahinch —Keane went there on Monday, as he believes."

Why

Why the preceding was introduced by Hughes, or inserted in the Lord's report, I cannot possibly conceive, as it cannot be tortured into the support of any charge or even suspicion against Dr. Dickson. Yet, it derives importance, like many other *silly, senseless, impertinent, things,* from the *place* which it *holds.* Hence, *like them,* it may claim some notice.

Be it noted then, that Mr. Keane of Finlay's bank was a person totally unknown to Dr. Dickson; and that he never had any business either with him or Finlay's bank, of any kind whatever---that, from what has been related, in this narrative, Dr. Dickson neither was nor could be found by him, in Ballynahinch, on Monday---and, that, as Dr. Dickson was taken prisoner, on the day following, it may be presumed that they did not meet, on that day.

Be it noted also, that Portaferry, the place of Dr. Dickson's residence, and Belfast, are equally distant from Dublin, though twenty two miles asunder---that, on Sunday, Dr. Dickson, as Minister of the congregation, was more likely to be found there, than heard of in Belfast, What, then, could drive Mr. Keane to Belfast, to inquire where Dr. Dickson was, be his business what it might? And, in a town so populous and where Dr. Dickson had many hundreds of intimate acquaintances during *thirty* preceding years,

years, what kind dæmon could have directed him to Mr. Hughes, who has claimed only an intimate knowledge of the Doctor, for *two* years, and with whom the Doctor has disclaimed all intimacy? Should it be supposed that Mr. Keane had been at Portaferry, and directed thence to Belfast, such supposition must be overturned by the fact that every individual of the Doctor's family could have assured him of finding him at *Ballee* on Monday.

Only one supposition remains, on which Mr. Keane's going to Belfast can be accounted for. That is, that Dr. Dickson, as he did not know that such a man as Mr. Keane existed, may have informed some *friend* in Dublin, who informed Mr. Keane, that he might be heard of in Belfast, at such and such a time.

But, at such a time, and *in such an emergency*, why give such information? Dr. Dickson knew that he was *obliged*, by the appointment of his Presbytery, to be at Ballee, on Saturday, Sunday, and Monday (2d. 3d. and 4th. of June) and was determined to proceed thence to Ballinahinch. Why, then, not inform his friend *directly* that he would be found at these places, on these days respectively, rather than give occasion to a wandering inquiry by a circuitous route? From Dublin to Ballinahinch, *direct*, is only *seventy four* miles; by Belfast, *ninety-four*---to

Ballee, *seventy-three;* by Belfast, *one hundred and four.* Besides, the information, obtained in Belfast, only led to a wild-goose chase; whereas the other would have secured the attainment of its object.

I shall mention only one other circumstance, on this part of the business. Mr. Hughes swore, before the committee, that " Dickson said he would go from Mr. Pottinger's to Ballee, where he was to preach on Sunday"---the very Sunday, on which he swore also that Mr. Keane called on him. Now, as Dr. Dickson was to be at Ballee, by an authoritative appointment, not only on Sunday, but on the preceding Saturday, and Monday following, is it probable that he mentioned one of these days to Mr. Hughes, without speaking of the other two ? If so, why tell Mr. Keane—and, as appears, tell him *positively*—" he would find him at Ballinahinch," where, in consequence of his appointment, he could not possibly be ?

We now come to the last paragraph of Mr. Hughes's information, in the order of the Lord's report. " On Friday the 1st. of June, Dickson told him that he was one of the Adjutant Generals of the united Irishmen's forces in the county of Down; and that he (Dickson) would go to Ballinahinch and remain there till Wednesday, as it was a central place, from which he could issue

issue his orders to his officers—Dickson told him that the reason why he would remain at Ballinahinch till Wednesday was, that the Antrim Colonels had adjourned till the Tuesday, and that he could receive their determination in Ballinahinch on Wednesday."

What a paragraph is here ! ! ! On considering it, *as* it stands, and *where* it stands, it has a curious aspect—on placing it where it *ought* to be and restoring the connexion, broken by the preceding episode, I am convinced, my readers will be surprised, astonished, provoked! By looking back to the first paragraph, they will perceive that Dr. Dickson's supposed message by Mr. Magin was delivered to Mr. Hughes, on Friday the 1st. of June, and that the Doctor's communication, according with what " *Mr. Magin had stated,* was made to him, *on the same day.* On returning to this paragraph, he will find that it begins with: " On Friday the 1st. of June, Dickson told, &c. &c." Hence the whole information, contained in both paragraphs, must have been *given* to Mr. Hughes on the said " 1st. of June, two days previous to Mr. Keane's arrival from Dublin on Sunday the third of June whatever may have been the order, in which said information may have been communicated by him, to the committee of Lords.

Here, it may naturally be asked, " why was the story of Mr. Keane inserted in the report before this paragraph ?"

The reason, to me, seems obvious. Mr. Hughes had told his story, before it was observed by him, General Barber, before whom he first swore, or his other wise and noble examinants—the *hereditary Counsellors of Kings*—that his information was mysterious, defective, and good for nothing, without explanation, additions and amendments. It assigned no reason whatever for Dr. Dickson's intended journey, nor any end to be accomplished, either by his going to, or remaining at, Ballinahinch. This being discovered, it became necessary to ransack the memory, or stimulate the invention of Mr. Hughes, *anew*, in order to make something of him and his discoveries. The result of this rummage, or stimulation, or both, as stated in the paragraph under consideration, explains every mystery, supplies every defect, and accounts for every resolve, and every movement. " Dickson told him that he was *one* of the Adjutant Generals &c. &c.—that he would go to Ballinahinch &c. &c. as it was a central place, from which he could issue his orders to his officers—that he would remain in Ballinahinch till Wednesday, *because* the Antrim Colonels had adjourned

adjourned till the Tuesday, and he could receive their determination in Ballinahinch on Wednesday."

Now, admitting that Dr. Dickson was one of the Adjutant Generals of the county of Down, the first reason for his going to, and remaining at Ballinahinch, is perfectly competent. That it was deemed the most eligible place for head-quarters, the Rebels proved, afterwards, by fixing their standard there. Of the second reason the same may be said, though, to an *inattentive* reader, its competency may not be so obvious. If such will revise the first paragragh, of the examination of Mr. Hughes, he will see that the agreement of the twenty-three Colonels of the county of Down, on the 31st. of May, to "commence the rebellion," was on the condition that "the county of Antrim, *and the other counties of Ulster*, would act with them." Hence an apparent necessity that an Adjutant General of the county of Down should be assured of the co-operation of the other counties, before he could, with propriety, issue any orders to his Officers "to commence the rebellion." Consequently, this reason for GENERAL DICKSON'S "going to, and remaining at, Ballinahinch, until he should receive the determination of the Antrim Colonels," as assigned by Mr. Hughes, is equally competent, so far as it extends. But, it did not extend far enough. The commence-

ment

ment of the rebellion was not agreed to by the county of Down Colonels, on the exclusive condition of the co-operation of the county of Antrim, but that of " the other counties of Ulster." Admitting, therefore, that the determination of the Antrim Colonels had been favorable, can it be supposed that General Dickson would have presumed, *on it alone*, to issue orders to his Officers " to commence the rebellion; or that they would have acted on such orders; while the determination of all the other counties of Ulster was, to them totally unknown? The supposition is too wild to be entertained, even for a moment.

Perhaps it may be said, in opposition to this that these two counties did " commence the rebellion," without knowing the determination of the other counties. True! But, it is equally true, so far as I could ever learn, that they did so without the orders of any General---nay, contrary to the will, and without the co-operation, *even of their Colonels.*

But, let us return to the examinations of Mr. Hughes. Was Dr. Dickson really an Adjutant General? Mr. Hughes has sworn that he told *him* so. And this is the only evidence of the fact, so far as I know, that has ever been produced, or even alleged. Now, in what words according to the oath of Mr. Hughes, did he tell

tell him so? "Dickson told him that he was *one* of the Adjutant Generals of the county of Down." ONE of the Adjutant Generals!! This must be incorrect. Either Dr. Dickson, or Mr. Hughes, must have been very ignorant of, or inattentive to, the military constitution of their own body; for, in the same report of the committee of Lords, from which I have extracted the examinations of Mr. Hughes, those of Thomas Addis Emmet Esq. and Dr. M'Nevin, taken on oath, the 7th. and 11th. of August 1798, shew that there was only *one* Adjutant General in each county. The words of Mr. Emmet are: "It was thought necessary (by the executive) to have *an* Adjutant General in each county:" And again, "the Colonels of each county returned the names of three persons to the executive, who appointed *one* of them to act as Adjutant General of the county." Dr. M'Nevin's are the same, except the word, "sent," instead of "returned." How, then, could Dr. Dickson tell Mr. Hughes, not that he was *the* Adjutant General, but "*one* of *the* Adjutant Generals of the county of Down?" Let every reader answer this question to himself; and judge of General Dickson and Mr. Hughes accordingly.

I now come to another circumstance in this paragraph, which seems of some importance. Mr. Hughes has sworn that Dr. Dickson's alleged

alleged reason for going to Ballinahinch, was the conveniency of the place, from its central situation, for issuing *his* orders to his officers—and, for remaining there till Wednesday, that, on that day, he could receive the determination of the Antrim Colonels. Now, if the receipt of this determination was necessary, previous to the issue of *his* orders, these orders must have been very limited, or the Doctor, now dubbed General, must have had a very high opinion of his own abilities. He did not expect to receive the determination till Wednesday. Its arrival might be late in the day. And his stay was limited to that day. How, then, could he suppose himself capable of preparing and issuing orders, through a large county, and to a number of Colonels, so great that twenty-three constituted only a part, in one day, or rather, a few hours of one day? This seems to imply some difficulty, even supposing his waiting the return of his couriers totally unnecessary. However this difficulty is removed by adverting to a simple fact. The duty of Adjutant General was strictly confined to the communication of such useful knowledge as he could procure, on subjects particularly specified, to the executive *exclusively*, and in like manner, to communicate *military orders* from them, and from *them alone*. Hence, General Dickson could be in no difficulty about the "issue of *his* orders. He could have none such to issue; nor could

could he have any official connexion with the meeting of the colonels of the county of Antrim, or of any other county in Ulster. This I assert, on the authority of the reports so often quoted; and leave my readers, as before, to form their own opinions.

Prolix as I may have been, on the matter of Mr. Hughes' examinations, a circumstance, most perplexing, yet remains for consideration. Mr. Hughes swears that, "as he (Dickson) knew there was to have been a meeting of the colonels of the county of Antrim that day, Dickson wished to know whether he had heard any thing from it—he said he had not heard of the meeting." Again, "Dickson told him that the reason why he would remain at Ballinahinch till Wednesday was, that the Antrim colonels had adjourned till the Tuesday." And "Dickson requested him to send him intelligence, to Mr. Pottinger's of what should be done in the Antrim meeting."

I have called the circumstance, now repeated, "perplexing." I cannot review it without perplexity. This, however, does not arise from its obscurity, but from the confusion, inconsistency, and self-contradiction, with which the relation of it is so strongly marked. He not only asserted *repeatedly in words*, but swore thrice, at three very different times, and

before three tribunals, to the same inconsistencies and contradictions. He swore that Dr. Dickson came to him the 1st. of June, desiring information from him respecting a meeting of colonels---that Dr. Dickson gave him the very information which he expressed a wish to procure---and after having given him this information, Dr. Dickson, *on parting*, requested the same information to be sent after him &c.". Now, if these words do not express contradictions, I cannot conceive what the word " contradiction" means. And if swearing to these words does not constitute *perjury*, I am equally at a loss to know wherein *perjury* consists. However, should it be deemed *perjury*, let it be observed that this is the second instance in which Mr. Hughes stands self-convicted of that crime, in his examination respecting Dr. Dickson, as published by *authority*.

To account for all this, so far as it respects Mr. Hughes, let it be remembered that, when he was smuggled into the *stove*, where Dr. Dickson was put under a *sweating course* in the prevost-prison, he was *deranged*, or affected to be so: that he was carried off *daily* for a few hours, no doubt to allow him an opportunity of *breathing a better air*: that, during these hours, none of his fellow-prisoners were admitted, lest *their* breath should affect him: and that on these occasions, general Barber was his

his principal nurse-tender. In such a situation, it may be supposed that general Barber might ask him some questions; and, as his case was *alarming*, might require a confirmation of his answers by an oath. Hence, his inconsistencies and contradictions may be ascribed to a confused recollection, nervous agitation, temporary derangement, or palsy of the mind, arising from terror. Once involved in these, and entangled by this oath, he could not recede. To recede would have been, not only to forfeit his *honor* as a *real penitent* and *faithful witness;* but to embrace the *lamp-iron* and the *hatchet*, as the reward of his virtues, and only remaining portion of his inheritance.

But, whatever may have been the agitation, derangement, or mental palsy of Mr. Hughes; and however uniform and inveterate the *disorder* of his mind may have continued for two months; we cannot suppose that all the members of the secret committee of lords---nay, that all the members of both houses of parliament; and all the law-officers of the crown, including even their clerks, were as stupified, demented, or palsied in intellect, as he appears to have been. What then are we to suppose? Let us suppose the best. That is, that they were all so deeply and unceasingly immerged in a *great eventful political project*, that they had neither eyes, ears, time, nor attention to *lavish* on the absurdities,

 inconsistencies,

inconsistencies, and self-contradictions of John Hughes, and his fellow-laborers for the *church-yard*, or the sides of the *king's highways*. These even if implicitly received, and acted on to the utmost, could only relieve them from the impertinence of a few individuals hostile to their views. The other, if succeeded in, would not only disburthen their country of an imperial crown, and secure it against the protracted *curse* of a national legislature; but gratify their own *inqualified* love of their *native soil*, by condemning a great majority of themselves, and *their successors for ever*, to languish on its surface, or riot on its produce, clothed with well-earned contempt, pious execration, and unenvied political insignificance.

On the whole of what I have stated; and on the supposition that my readers have a moderate share of common-sense; I ask, could any thing above stupidity, ignorance, or insanity, have encouraged or received any part of the examinations of John Hughes *as information?* Could any thing short of the same mental defects or derangement; or an inattention, unpardonable in counsellors of a crown, legislators of a kingdom, and guardians of the property, lives, and liberties, of a nation, account for their publication to the world, as containing *evidence of crime* in any human being? Nay, I ask, must not the government, or underlings,

underlings, entrusted with, or usurping and exercising its powers, which acted on such information, to the distress and ruin of many individuals and families; and even to the privation of life; be charged with blended credulity, misguided passion, personal enmity, or gratuitous malice? These questions I do not confine to the advocates or the opponents of the ministers and legislators of that day. To themselves, or such of them as providence yet preserves, I freely propose them. Let such answer, as at a future day they must answer, and their answers shall be decisive.

With respect to Dr. Dickson, there can be but one opinion, in this matter. From the examinations of Hughes—the only examinations, *pointing at him*, an authenticated report of which has yet reached my eye or ear—even a shade of criminality does not attach to his character. Every thing, which can be darkened into such, rests entirely on words attributed to himself; and which, if spoken, conveyed a *falsehood*. In fact, after all the eager, insiduous, virulent, and long-protracted attempts, which have been made the *purchase*, *create* or *extort*, evidence of his criminality, he appears, even now, to have been his OWN, and his ONLY, supposed accuser. And this, notwithstanding the publicity of his character and conduct, for more than thirty years, in the county of Down; and the

the consequent intimacy with which he was known by multitudes, embracing every rank, profession, and denomination,—from the highest to the lowest---from the peer to the peasant---and from the bishop to the beadle : And, notwithstanding the extension of his connexions and intimacy with the populous town of Belfast; a considerable part of the county of Antrim; to many other persons and places in Ulster; and not a few in Leinster, including the city of Dublin. I say, notwithstanding all these, Dr. Dickson appears as his own *only* accuser ! I say, farther that he challenges the whole surviving train of his persecutors and calumniators, the Rev. John Cleland not excepted, to convict him ; or bring forward a credible witness, who shall convict him ; of any public act, as a man, as a member of the state, or as a minister of the gospel, for which virtue will disclaim him, religion chill him with a frown, or his country brand him with the odious character of an enemy to her rights, or an apostate from her interests.

HAVING CONCLUDED MY REVIEW

OF THE

EXAMINATION OF MR. HUGHES,

BEFORE THE COMMITTEE OF LORDS,

I consoled myself with the hope that I had done with examinations of him, and all such. However, some time after, I was convinced of the contrary. On reading it to a friend, he asked me, with seeming astonishment, whether I did not know of other examinations, before the secret committees, in which I was implicated. I answered in the negative. He then told me that, though he had not seen their reports, he could assure me that they contained a long examination of Nicholas Magin, before the committee of the house of commons, in which my name was introduced; adding that, if I passed it unnoticed, it might be concluded that it contained information against me, which I could not refute, and therefore dared not to meet.

Impressed with the justness of this observation, I delayed the publication of my narrative, till I should procure a sight of this report; which proved a matter of much greater difficulty than I could have imagined. It was not to be found in the circle of those stigmatized, *as my friends*, or

or supposed to be such. However, after long delay, and many inquiries, it was obtained in one of the most extensive offices of *intelligence*, in the North of Ireland; but an office from which the mandate of cruelty never issued; and put into my hand on the 4th. of September 1810, and not before.

During my search, I was surprised at the difficulty of procuring the book. After reading it, I was more surprised that it could possibly be procured. And, though it, no doubt, contains much well-founded information, and many authentic documents, yet it contains also so much *matter*, rising infinitely above, and extending far beyond, all foundation and all authority, that it should never have been presented to the eye, or entrusted to the hand, of the *disaffected*. The whole edition should have been purchased, by the friends of the then existing minister, social order, regular government, and the *imperial independence of Ireland*, and sacrificed to Moloch, by the hands of the common hangman---the officiating priest of the day: or by those, who abetted, and acted on, such information as that of Hughes and Magin; to be bound up with Sir Richard Musgrave's history of the rebellion in Ireland, secured in their bureaus, and reserved for their *amusement* in the day of affliction, and the *consolation* of their souls on the bed of death. This idea, I trust, I have

have fully justified, so far as the examination of John Hughes, before the committee of Lords, is concerned; and we shall soon see, whether, and how far, that of Mr. Magin tends to its support.

Mr. Magin's information is brought forward by a preface, which displays the most scrupulous and ardent zeal to establish his competency as a witness; and the correctness of the papers, verified by the OATH of the Rev. John Cleland, and presented to the committee, as containing the exact information communicated to him, *from time to time*, by Magin; or, as his name is there spelled, "Maguan. Said preface is as follows:

No. 14---"The information contained in this number of the appendix was received from Nicholas Maguan, of Saintfield, in the county of Down, who was himself a member of the provincial and county committees, and also a colonel in the military system of united Irishmen. He was present at each of the meetings of which an account is here given; and from time to time, immediately after each meeting, communicated what passed thereat to the Rev. John Cleland, a magistrate of the said county. The person giving the information has since verified it upon oath before the committee of the lords; and Mr. Cleland has likewise sworn

that the papers presented to the committee contain the exact information so communicated to him by Maguan."

Surely, if external circumstances can stamp any information with credit, that given by Maguan, committed to writing and sanctioned, *on oath*, by Mr. Cleland, a clergyman and a magistrate, must be credible. He (Maguan) is represented as high in office, both civil and military; and therefore, may be supposed of sound mind. He was an eye and ear witness of all that he attested, and made his communications to the Rev. John Cleland, *from time to time*, *immediately* after each meeting which he attended. Hence slips of memory can scarcely be suspected, even though he had neglected notes, on the spot, of what passed at each of these meetings. And the Rev. John Cleland swore that " the papers, presented by him to the committee, contained the *exact* information so communicated to him by Maguan." This, certainly, gives the contents of these papers, extended as they are, and embracing a great variety of persons and things of no mean consideration, an air of authenticity truly imposing. Indeed, the extent and variety of their matter are so great, that I cannot let them pass unnoticed. Though the time of action comprehends only thirteen months and twenty one days, they detail the transactions of *fourteen* provincial meetings;

meetings; *sixteen* county meetings, and nine meetings of colonels, or of captains, at all which Mr. Magin must have attended; besides provincial reports, returns of men, women, money, arms, and ammunition, communications with France, and a letter from united Britons. Nor are the style and arrangement unworthy of the subject. Though these are not perfectly classical or correct, I am fully convinced, there is not a man in Ireland, of Mr. Magin's education, opportunities, and connexions, equal to *such dictation* of *such* a *recital*,---EXCEPT HIMSELF.

But, be this as it may, though number 14 occupies thirty pages large octavo, in a small type, and with narrow margin; and though it records so many meetings, it does not mention Dr. Dickson as present at, or privy to, any one of these meetings; neither does it mention, or even allude to him, as holding any office derived from, or connected with, united Irishmen. His name, indeed, appears twice in the last nine lines of Mr. Magin's information; but this is only in the mention of a report, which had reached a meeting of colonels. assembled some where or other on the 5th. of June, that he had been taken prisoner at Ballinahinch, on the preceding evening, and that the people there had a conditional intention to rescue him.

But, that Mr. Magin's information may appéar in its own colors, and rest on its own base, I shall transcribe the whole passage, respecting the two last meetings, of which he makes mention; and, of which it can be presumed, even from the examinations of Mr. Hughes, that Dr. Dickson had any knowledge.

" Meeting of colonels---May 31st.---Saintfield.

Persons assembled [their names] represented ten regiments; they received the provincial reports, and generally determined to act; several messages passed between the different colonels, as to this resolution; a few days after this an adjutant general resigned, and at a meeting where twenty three colonels were assembled, only two resolved for action, and the other twenty one declared they would not act on any plan but on the invasion of the French or success to the efforts of the insurgents about Dublin. They are to meet again on Tuesday next to elect a new adjutant general, and to hear the situation of the other provinces. The adjutant general for the county of down proposed to take up his head-quarters at Ballinahinch, and to make it the place of rendezvous for the forces of the county of Down.

On the 5th. June messages past between the adjutant general of Down and the colonels; they

they urged the adjutant general to put the county of Down in motion, or that if he declined it they would find a man who could do so. A message was received and delivered upon oath that the county of Antrim intended seizing on the magistrates assembled in Antrim at the sessions as hostages, at the beginning of their rising. It was ordered that an express should be sent to all the colonels of the county of Down, commanding them to collect their regiments as nearly as possible at the same time; at this time an account was brought that Dr. Dickson was made a prisoner in Ballinahinch about nine o'clock yesterday evening by lord Annesley's yeomen. At first it was resolved to wait the result of the meeting of the new executive at Ballymena on the 8th. June; they dispersed for the present, and concealed themselves; afterwards attempts were made to prevail on persons to take the chief command. The people of Ballinahinch were of opinion they could rescue Dickson the moment the county meant to act, and it was their intention so to do."

Having faithfully presented this extract to my readers, I must now crave their attention to the only part of its contents, which can be supposed to glance at Dr. Dickson. "A few days after the 31st. of May an adjutant general resigned—Tuesday the 5th. of June was appointed for

for the election of a successor—that election must have taken place, as, at some time on that day, the county of Down had an adjutant general—ay! and that general was a poltroon, who after messages having passed between him and the colonels, urging him to put the county of Down in motion, and threatening him with being superseded if he did not, refused, or hesitated so to do."

Now, that general Dickson was not that poltroon, Mr. Magin's testimony fully proves. For even supposing Dickson to have been absent when elected; supposing that the urging and *threatening* was by message; surely the colonels, during this correspondence, must have, at least, known by their messengers, where he was, and in what situation he was. Yet, of both they were totally ignorant; nor does it appear that he was either spoken or thought of, during the day, until "an account was brought that Dr. Dickson was made a prisoner in Ballinahinch about nine o'clock yesterday evening;" on the receipt of which they believed it so firmly that "they dispersed and concealed themselves."

As a farther proof of this their ignorance, respecting Dr. Dickson, be it observed that the account was *totally void of truth*, and could not possibly have excited either alarm or terror had they known any thing about him. He did not arrive

arrive in Ballinahinch until after *ten* o'clock on the evening of June the 4th. that is, more than an hour after the reported time of his arrest; and that arrest did not take place until nine o'clock on the evening following—probably several hours after the colonels had dispersed, and concealed themselves, according to Mr. Magin's information. Read this and wonder, ye children of credulity! Read it and repent, ye dæmons of persecution! Surely, none of you will henceforth assert that Dr. Dickson was an adjutant general of the county of Down the 5th. of June; or repeat the compliment paid him by Mr. Pollock; " that he was not a *coward*, like the *generality* of his *brethren!—He was taken at his post!*"

Should it be said that, though he neither *was* nor *could be* the *poltroon* general, notwithstanding Mr. Pollock's firm belief of the contrary, he may have been the *resigning* general. The question put to Dr. Dickson by Mr. Pollock; " whether he had not received a commission as such, at Killinchy, in presence of Mr. Magin;" and that, proposed to Mr. Thomson, by the Rev. John Cleland, " Whether he was not one of a deputation, from the county of Down committee, who gave the Doctor a high appointment, at Killinchy fair;" together with the oath of Mr. Hughes that Dr. Dickson told him, on the 1st. of June that he was *one* of the adjutant generals

generals of the county of Down; as already stated, give a plausibility to such saying. But this must be all done away by the recollection that Mr. Magin's testimony, which gave rise to both questions, and constitutes the whole of Mr. Cleland's *book of chronicles*, is overturned by the single fact, that he (Magin) was not *in* or *near* Killinchy, on the day assigned for the delivery of the commission in question; and that of Mr. Hughes, by the knowledge that there could not be more *than one* adjutant general in any county at the same time.

Some additional light is thrown on this part of the subject by another fact. Though Mr. Magin's information gives an account of thirty nine meetings which he attended, in less than fourteen months, it does not mention or allude to, any meeting of any kind, at Killinchy, during that period. Yet I consider myself authorised to affirm that a meeting of colonels was holden there, on the first Wednesday of May 1798, being the day of a fair. Now, if such meeting was really holden there, why did not Mr. Magin report it to Mr. Cleland *as he did the others?* If he did report it, why does not the report appear in Mr. Cleland's "exact communication of the information given him?"

To these it may be answered, that the report, so far as related to Dr. Dickson's commission, was

was exposed, *as a fable*, to Mr. Pollock, in the month of June; that, in all probability, this exposure was communicated *immediately* to Mr. Cleland, as all Mr. Magin's former informations had been; and that, as Mr. Cleland's papers were not presented to the committee of the house of commons until the 17th. July, he, as a faithful recorder of truth *for the public good*, took advantage of the intermediate time to expunge the whole Killinchy chapter from his invaluable record, knowing that the smallest intermixture of fable weakens the credit, and *defeats the end*, of the most veritable history.

There is yet another circumstance, in the preceding extract, which seems rather unaccountable. *A few days* after the 31st. May an adjutant general resigned, and on the 5th. June a successor was chosen. Now, that all justice may be done to Mr. Magin, I shall suppose these few days to have been only two, or even part of two. In this case, the resignation must have taken place on Saturday June 2d. This leaves only two days for summoning the colonels of the county; for their assembling from all quarters, and holding the meeting at which they appointed June 5th. for their new election. The county of Down is of *very considerable extent*, and we must suppose the summons nearly of the same extent, as, *on the spur of the moment*, *twenty three* colonels attended—a number une-

qualled in any one of the *thirty eight* previous meetings, at which Mr. Magin was present. Hence, we must conclude that the expresses, announcing the resignation, used all possible expedition; and that the colonels must have been equally expeditious in hurrying to their place of meeting; else they could not have had time for the business said to have been there transacted.

But, supposing all this effected, how could these colonels presume to elect an adjutant general? The instruction of the provincial meeting, February 27th. 1798, runs thus: "The colonels in each county are to make out a list of the names of persons to act as adjutant generals, to be sealed up and returned through the medium of the provincial, or any other authentic channel:" and Messrs. Emmet and M'Neven have sworn that this was the usual mode of procedure. Their words are: "The colonels of each county returned the names of three persons to the executive, *one* of whom was appointed, *by the executive*, adjutant general of the county."

This instruction and practice contrasted with Mr. Magin's statement present a perplexing dilemma. Should we admit that Mr. Magin had *inadvertently* made such a blunder in respect to the electors of an adjutant general, as Mr. Hughes

Hughes had done about the number of such generals in each county; and that the Down colonels had gone through the routine prescribed, it must be evident that this could not possibly have been effected in the time mentioned. On the other hand, if Mr. Magin's statement be correct, these same colonels were guilty, not only of departing from instructions, but violating the constitution of the united body, and thereby liable to such pains and penalties as their *executive* might think proper to inflict. Which of these may have been the case I dare not presume to determine; though I am inclined to favor the latter, for different reasons. First; the former goes to charge Mr. Magin with a direct falsehood, or the *exact* communicator of his information with want of exactness; while the latter leaves the credit of both untouched. Secondly; some of these twenty three colonels, in such a county as Down, must have read a little *modern* history. In such reading they could not overlook glaring instances of constitutions violated; powers *beyond, above,* and *contrary to law* exercised; military turned loose under military magistrates; and terror, torture, desolation, and death, spread far and wide; while the devisers, abettors, and perpetrators, of the whole, were secured against every pain and penalty, except the lashes of their own conscience, and the execration of the world, by *bills of indemnity* issuing from a tender-

hearted indulgent legislature. Admit, then, that some might be damped by fear of pains and penalties, may we not suppose that one of these half-read historians, after reciting some examples of such violations, and such indemnity, might have addressed his brother-colonels in some such words as these: "Ye know that all I have told you is true. Why, then should we be afraid? This is no time to boggle at shadows. This d——d resignation threatens the destruction of our system, and the demolition of our hopes, if not immediately counteracted by the election of a successor, through whom our communication with the executive may be kept up. The urgency of the case admits of no delay. Let us, therefore, meet on Tuesday, and proceed to the election. It will be only a *small* deviation from an instruction in a matter of *mere* form: and if, under *old* governments, plunder, torture, sacrilege, and murder—not to speak of transmission to tenders, arbitrary confinement, and perpetual exile—have been screened by bills of indemnity, surely our *new* government, having considered our zeal, the *purity* of our motives, and the *merit* of our services, will not withhold from us a bill of indemnity, when *our measures shall be crowned with success.*"

In the preceding review of Mr. Magin's information, as *exactly* communicated by the Rev. John Cleland, I trust it will be admitted that I have

have treated both gentlemen, not only with candor, but with kindness—with candor, in stating the information of the former in the *exact* words sworn to by the latter—with kindness, in endeavouring to reconcile, or remove, the *seeming* inconsistencies which they contain. Under this impression I would willingly have taken leave of them: but the volume before me obliges me to keep Mr. Magin a little longer in view, as it contains a document, of which I had never heard until the book came into my hands. This is entitled, " extracts from the examinations of John Hughes of Belfast, bookseller, given upon oath before general Lucius Barber, and since confirmed on oath before the committee of the lords, and on his examination before the committee of the commons: " and contains matter which not only presents Messrs. Hughes and Magin as differing from each other, *upon oath*; but Mr. Hughes as differing from himself, in an instance, where mistake could hardly have been expected. In this document his words are: " he ( ) called on him on Friday the 1st. of June, and told him that the colonels of the united regiments of the county of Down, had had a meeting *in Saintfield* the day before as ( ) had stated;" whereas, in his examination before the lords he swears that Dickson on the first of June, told him that the meeting on the day before had been *in a field* as Mr. Magin had stated." Let these statements speak for

for themselves! I shall only observe that the meeting thus doubly reported to Mr. Hughes as having taken place on the day before the 1st. of June; and that recorded by Mr. Magin, and introduced thus, "meeting of colonels—May 31st.—Saintfield," must have been the same.

This admitted, let us advert to the accounts of this meeting, given *on oath*, by these gentlemen. Mr. Hughes, on the alleged authority of Dr. Dickson and a previous statement by Mr. Magin, calls it "a meeting of the colonels of the county:" and speaks of twenty three as being only a part of the number assembled. Mr. Magin's minute says: "persons assembled represented ten regiments," without specifying their number. This leaves room for conjecture, both as to the number of colonels who attended this meeting, and the number appointed to each regiment. In order to reconcile the two accounts, we must attach three colonels, at least, to each of Mr. Magin's regiments, as a smaller number would not admit of twenty three being only a part of the attending colonels as already stated. Perhaps, however, this difficulty, like many others, must be referred for solution to those who created it. For my part, I made the attempt again and again. At one time I flattered myself that I had succeeded. As Mr. Magin mentions a meeting of twenty three colonels, I endeavoured to identify it with that of Mr. Hughes. But, after many struggles, I

was

was obliged to desist. They could not be brought into one, either as to time, circumstances, or result. The one took place, May 31st. the other a few days after it—the one consisted of a number of colonels, of which twenty three was only a part; the other of only twenty three in all—of the one, twenty three agreed to fight and commence the rebellion; of the other, two only resolved to fight, while the other twenty one refused to act on any plan but the invasion of the French or success to the insurgents about Dublin.

While this diversity of circumstances rendered the solution of one difficulty impracticable, the frequent review of the conduct of the Down colonels, and the versatility of mind exhibited by them, in the short space of six days, involved me in another not less perplexing. The view of these, in the page before me, is thus exhibited. "May 31st. twenty three colonels agree to fight. June 3d. or 4th. twenty one, out of twenty three decline fighting; yet appoint a meeting to be holden on the 5th. for the election of an adjutant general. June 5th. they meet accordingly, elect a general; unanimously urge him to put the county in motion, and threaten to cashier him if he would not; yet on a flying report of the arrest of an individual at a distance, and which turned out to be an arrant lie, they dispersed, and concealed themselves." Perhaps,

haps, all this may be true. Yet its truth appears to me very questionable. However, I shall leave my readers to pronounce upon it, in common with all the other parts of the examinations laid before them; and to answer the following short questions to the satisfaction of their own minds:

1. Does the information of John Hughes, taken in mass, prove that Dr. Dickson ever was an adjutant general?

2. Does not the information of Nicholas Magin, if it proves any thing concerning him, prove clearly that he never was?

3. Do not these informations, whether considered separately, or compared together, exhibit such glaring absurdities, inconsistencies, contradictions, and notorious falsehood, as prove their authors totally unworthy of all credit on any oaths, however solemn, or frequently repeated?

4. When it appears, by their own information, that the lives of both had long been forfeited; and when it is known that Hughes was a *bankrupt*, and Magin a *poor* man; is it not probable that these informations were extorted under the fear of immediate death, or elicited by promise of reward and future support?

5. What

5. What are we to think of the committees who, under such circumstances, received them implicitly as evidence; of the houses of parliament which gave them sanction by an acquiescence equally implicit; or of those who, *without trial or farther inquiry*, acted upon them, not only to the distress of individuals, but the ruin of families? This question I asked before. I repeat it here, on account of its peculiar importance.

Leaving these questions as they stand, I shall only observe, that the informations, from which they arise, fully justify the acknowledgment of Mr. secretary Cooke; as formerly stated, in respect to an individual, for whom trial was demanded. " O no:" said he, " the information against him will not admit of its being brought forward in a court of justice. It is sufficient to SATISFY US, but not to CONVICT HIM "

Here I gladly take leave of Messrs. Hughes and Magin: and I beg they may rest assured that I do not entertain a sentiment that would prompt me to do them an injury, or a wish inconsistent with their *best* interests and their *only real* happiness. However, the informations before me carry something on their face, and in the mode of their introduction by the right hon. and hon. the committees of the lords and commons, which prevents my shaking them off

at the same time. The committee of the lords, through their long printed report of the examination of John Hughes, exhibit not only the names, but the occupations, and places of abode, of the persons mentioned by him, in his information. On the contrary, in the printed report, from the committee of the commons, of the information by Nicholas Magin, as given in, and attested on oath, by the Rev. John Cleland, and comprising thirty-nine meetings at which Magin was present, no name, of any member of any one of these meetings, is mentioned; though the names of all are admitted to have been contained in the *exact* written communication. The printed minute of these meetings begins thus; "nine members present (their names appear in the original)." "(Names of persons present)." "Thirteen members present [their names]," or, "persons assembled [their names] represented ten regiments." In the report of extracts from the examinations of John Hughes, by the committee of the commons, one part exhibits names, the other does not. The part, containing names, principally consists of conversations with individuals, or private parties, and of stories told him. Only one public meeting is mentioned: and all related in it took place before June, 1797, from which time he did not attend any meetings till March, 1798. After this, the extracts contain no information

formation from Hughes, but what bears date June 1st, 1798, in which all names are suppressed, as in Magin's examination.

Now, whence this difference? why are all names specified by the committee of lords, and all concealed by that of the commons? This question I shall not pretend to answer. However, I cannot withhold a remark highly honorable to the former. By the publication of names every attention was directed to the persons affected by the information given, and to them only. No room was left for suspicion, misrepresentation, malicious censure, or unprovoked cruelty, in respect to others. The suppression of names, by the latter, had an effect directly contrary. The persons, constituting thirty-nine public meeting were as little known after the publication of the committee's report, as if they had never existed; whilst hundreds, unconnected with them, might be looked to by suspicion, or pointed at by private enmity, as their constituent members, and harassed accordingly.

Besides, I would observe that, as every thing respecting the Insurrection, so far as Ulster was concerned, was discussed and agreed to at these meetings, the members must have been of some consequence in their respective counties, and ought to have been laid hold of as soon as known. Now, the Rev. John Cleland has ac-

 knowledged

knowledged that Magin, immediately communicated to him, from time to time, what passed at each of these meetings; and swore that the papers given by him to the committee contained *exactly* the information so communicated. And the report shews that said meetings regularly succeeded each other, from the 14th. of April, 1797, till June 5th. 1798, only two days previous to the battle at Antrim.

Now, are we to suppose that the Rev. John Cleland, during these thirteen months and upwards, retained this time to time, information entirely to himself, without giving a hint to Lord Viscount Castlereagh of what was going on so rapidly uniformly, and dangerously? This cannot be supposed, on any principle of common sense or common honesty. If Mr. Cleland did communicate it to his Lordship, it is equally improbable that he should conceal it from the then existing government. And, if known to government, why was it not acted on? Should it be said that, for some time, the matter might appear trivial, and might be allowed to proceed for a season, as there could be little difficulty in suppressing it, different measures of government, and the reports of the committees, would lead to a presumption that they wished the people to believe that they thought otherwise. But, admitting that they despised the symptoms of insurrection in Ulster, during the greater

greater part of these thirteen months, surely the commencement, extent, and temporary success of insurrection in the counties all around the metropolis gave sufficient cause of alarm. Yet, even then, no notice was taken of the information of Magin corroborated as it was by the Rev. John Cleland. Not a man of the provincial, county, or baronial committees—not a general colonel, or even captain—who had attended any of these meetings, was apprehended, or even disturbed, so far as I can recollect, till the very eve of the insurrection. Nay, it does not appear, on any credible evidence that any one of those then arrested had ever been present with Magin at any meeting. Now, may it not be asked, " why were not these persons, against whom evidence positive and direct existed, taken into custody ? On a moderate calculation, they must have amounted, at least, to one hundred, perhaps twice that number. No man, therefore, can suppose that insurrection would have then taken place, where it did, had those been secured. But, if government did not wish to prevent insurrection, but rather to cherish it to a certain degree, and, therefore suffered Magin's information to sleep in quiet while it could be of any use, why the mockery of a solemn investigation after the insurrection was quelled ? And, why, after such investigation, instead of chastisement, conceal the names

of

of its authors and promoters from the public eye, while their treasons are exhibited in the darkest colors?

Instead of amusing ourselves with devising answers, let us attend to the few following years. and they will supply a sufficiency. In fact, the measure of union alone is sufficient for the purpose, as might be easily proved. Besides, such a train of blanks gave abundant scope for circulating suspicions, which credulity easily swallowed, and malicious cunning consolidated into certainty. Of this I have been a notorious instance, and continue so to be. During my confinement, many of my friends were alarmed for my life; on the authority of whispers, and private letters from men, *who had access to people about the Castle.* These whispers, and alleged authorities, were frequently and warmly urged, for my signing the compact for self-exportation; and so fully were my friends convinced of their truth, that they charged me with *madness* in rejecting the proffered mercy, as it was then called. Even after my return to Ireland, I was frequently congratulated on my *fortunate* escape, and most earnestly solicited to avoid all interference in public affairs for the future. But, what is still more remarkable, the active part, which I took, from beginning to end of the Down election in 1805, to assist the county in the vindication of its character by the rejection of

lord Castlereagh; left some apparently unconvinced of the real situation in which I stood. Some of my particular friends even solicited me to leave the county, as I was certainly in his lordship's power, *as they were well informed*, and my openness and activity would provoke his vengeance. I believed that I was not in his power, if justice enlightened by truth was to regulate that power; and acted accordingly. In fact, I would have proclaimed myself to the world, *as a villain*, if I had acted otherwise, let the consequence be what it might. In the year 1790, I had not only exerted myself with ardor, but involved myself in debt, to bring Mr. Robert Stewart into parliament, on the faith of his repeated and solemn pledges, to be the advocate of a reform, embracing the interests of all the people. Hence, I conceived it to be a duty to my character while living, and to my memory, if thought of, when dead, to oppose lord viscount Castlereagh as an apostate from the principles of Mr. Robert Stewart, the violater of his solemn engagements, and the unblushing betrayer of his country to a foreign *sanhedrim*.

In whatever light these circumstances may appear, when considered separately, I am sure, when viewed in connexion with the preceding Narrative, they will bring home conviction to every unbiassed mind that no evidence of my being

being implicated " in seditious or treasonable practices" ever was, or now is, in the possession of the Irish government, or any of its servants. That the informations of Hughes and Magin contain no such evidence, I hope I have fully proved; and, had there been any other, there can be no doubt but it would have been produced.

Of all this my unsolicited release from confinement and exile, and subsequent transmission to my family at the expence of government, must ever stand as incontrovertible proofs. Hence it will naturally be supposed that no evidence of my treasonable practices was elsewhere treasured up, nor any self-created court presumptuously devising counsels, equally insulting to the government of the country, and ruinous to a brother; much less that such should be found in an assembly of men solemnly set apart to preside in the worship of the God of mercy, and preach the Gospel of the Prince of peace. Whether, and how far, this was the fact, in the present case, my readers will be enabled to judge, from the following detail.

That the court, to which I allude, is the Synod of Ulster, or rather a little faction in that reverend body, whose influence in its proceedings has latterly been very great, and sometimes overwhelming, I mention with regret; and

and that I, who had enjoyed the privileges and exercised the rights of a member, for twenty-seven years, *blameless and uncensured*, should have ever become an object of obloquy, resentment, and persecution, has excited feelings the most painful that ever wrung my heart. I must say, however, that the pungency of these feelings did not arise so much from the situation to which the proceedings of Synod have reduced me and my family, as the effect which they may have on the interests of a body to which I had uniformly devoted my affections and my labors. Indeed, this latter idea still presses so painfully upon my mind that I enter upon the following recital with great reluctance: and I hope the coloring which has been given to public statement by private calumny, in order to justify the conduct of Synod towards me, will be deemed a sufficient apology.

During my confinement in Ireland, for ten months, my Rev. Fathers and brethren kept at awful and loyal distance from my prisons. A very few, even of those with whom I had long lived in intimacy and friendship, *dared* to call on me; and a few more apologised for their inattention, by pleading the *terror of the times.* At their annual meeting, in 1798, no Presbyterial return was made to the Synod, respecting me or my congregation, though it was holden nearly three months after my arrest: nor was

any notice taken, in their records, of my name, conduct, or situation; though, in other respects, they gave them the aspect of a Newgate chronicle, or a Tyburn gazette, rather than a registry of men and matters purely ecclesiastical.

But, however trivial their minutes of this meeting may appear, so far as they respect individuals, with regard to the members constituting the body met, they will ever be viewed in a light truly interesting. Their address to Majesty, wherever read or heard, must ever command serious attention; and lest it should be thought that I am capable of garbling or misrepresenting this interesting memoir, I shall here give it in full, from a copy duly authenticated, that the world may judge of it, in all its parts.

"*To the King's most excellent Majesty, the humble Address of the Ministers and Elders of the General Synod of Ulster, assembled at Lurgan on the 28th. day of August,* 1798.

MOST GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN,

We your Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders of the General Synod of Ulster, though prevented by a daring and flagitious rebellion raging in two counties of this province, from assembling at our stated season, eagerly embrace the first opportunity afforded

afforded by the return of tranquillity, to lay our sentiments of loyalty to your Majesty, and of sorrow and shame for the calamities and crimes of our country at the foot of the throne.

We chearfully renew those declarations of fidelity to the crown, and attachment to the constitution, from which we have never swerved. We can confidently assure your Majesty, that these have been the invariable principles and professions of this body—and we appeal to history to attest the inviolable attachment of the Presbyterians of Ireland to monarchy, counselled by an hereditary nobility, and supported and limited by an elective representative of the commons.

But while we dwell with exultation on those periods of our annals in which our ancestors firmly resisted the usurpation of Cromwell, vigorously supported the exertions of King William, and strenuously defended your Majesty's illustrious progenitors from the repeated attacks of a desperate pretender to the British throne, and this kingdom against the restless ambition of France; we are constrained to lament with the deepest humiliation, that the most stable and sacred principles of many of our people, and of some of our members, have been shaken by the convulsions of this sceptical and revolutionary æra.

Though we cannot presume to suggest the general infatuation of a great part of Europe, nor the incessant and deceitful artifices employed in this country to seduce our people, as apologies for crimes, which we ourselves deem inexcusable, much less for those few unworthy members of our body, whose conduct we can only view with grief and indignation.—Yet we venture to entreat your Majesty not to impute to the whole the transgressions of a part, nor to believe that the Synod of Ulster has fallen off from that line of conduct, which it heretofore uniformly maintained, nor from those principles which it has often solemnly avowed.

We beseech your Majesty to accept the faithful exertions of those who have withstood the torrent of popular fury, and the seductions of sophistical philosophy, as an atonement for their deluded brethren. Let the madness of the multitude be hidden from your eyes by the courage and sufferings of those of our communion who have fought and died in defence of their King, and country, their liberty and religion, and deign to hearken to our solemn engagement to recall the deluded from their errors and crimes—to make a strict inquiry into the conduct of our delinquent members; and to withstand to the best of our abilities those pernicious foreign principles, which threaten alike the temporal and eternal interests of mankind.

Finally,

Finally, we beseech the King of Kings, who stilleth the madness of the people, and maketh the wrath of man to praise him, and their vices to redound to his glory, to bless and protect your Majesty, to preserve your subjects from every fatal delusion, and to convert our follies, crimes, and miseries into instruments of wisdom, piety and happiness both now and for ever.

Signed in our name and by our appointment,

THOMAS CUMING, *Moderator.*

A true copy.

THOMAS CUMING, *Clerk of the General Synod.*

Dr. Cuming's father Malcolm Who was a minister in Aberdeen

Of this important memoir, various as are its matter and its merits, I do not wish to express a criticism, much less to utter a censure. The first three paragraphs I admire, notwithstanding some expressions savoring of the cant of the times; but the systematic theology of the fourth and fifth, respecting imputation, atonement &c. &c. with respect to a mortal like ourselves, seems rather constrained; and the last, I candidly own, I do not presume fully to understand.

The only circumstance, which I shall particularly remark, is couched in the following prayer to majesty: "deign to hearken to our solemn engagement to do our utmost to recall the deluded from their errors and crimes; and to

to make a strict enquiry into the conduct of our delinquent members." Could we consider the merits of the petitioners accepted as an atonement for the " errors and crimes of the deluded, though the petitioners deprecate an " imputation of the guilt," the solemn engagement to prevent future offence by recalling the " seduced" from a perseverance in their " errors and crimes," would have had some meaning; and their " strict enquiry into the conduct of their delinquent members " would have been equally an act of public and of private kindness. The same may be said of an unanimous injunction to the " several Presbyteries within their bounds to institute a solemn inquiry into the conduct and conversation of their respective members and probationers, and to make a faithful report of their procedure, at next meeting of Synod, under penalty of severe censure."

Had the design of this " faithful report" been to ascertain the " errors and crimes" of which the " deluded" had been convicted with a view to guard them against their repetition, by instruction, admonition, rebuke, or any other mode of *ecclesiastical* discipline, it might have passed unnoticed. But if, as seems to have been the case, it was to discover political offences, " treasonable and seditious practices," or any crimes affecting the interests of the government of the country, neither the " inquiry," nor

for the "report," seems to be the duty of the Synod of Ulster, as an ecclesiastical judicatory, but as members of the state, much less, if delinquents had been discovered, does it appear to me that they had any right to publish such delinquents as guilty of crimes against the state, without evidence assigned; and less still, to assume the sword of state, and proceed to inflict its punishments. Of legal processes I know nothing. But, to my understanding, it appears that their duty, even as members of the state could extend no farther than the giving over such delinquents, as they might discover, to the government of the country to be dealt with as evidence might warrant, and justice require. In the principal parts of these opinions I feel fully justified by notorious facts. The line of demarkation between ecclesiastical and civil jurisdiction is drawn with great precision, in every country of Europe, and the transgression of it has been guarded against with a jealous eye. Ecclesiastical inquisitors have never been suffered to interfere in matters of state; nor, even in crimes affecting the doctrine, worship, and discipline of the church, were sentence and execution ever entrusted to ecclesiastical judges, but to the laws and judges of the state.

Some delicate minds, in theory, have exclaimed loudly against the present government of France, under which every religious denomination

nation has equal freedom of access, not only to his God, but to the imperial throne, and the offices, honors, and emoluments of the state, because the Ministers of religion, on induction, are obliged to swear, not only to abstain from seditious practices and counsels, but to disclose *to government* all such as may come to their knowledge. How strange that these same delicate minds can enjoin "the several Presbyteries within their bounds to institute a solemn inquiry into state crimes and to make a faithful report of their procedure (not to the government, or the civil magistrate) but, to themselves, at the next meeting of Synod, *under penalty of severe censure.*"

Let the object of this injunction have been what it may, the several Presbyteries paid it due respect, by instituting inquiries, and reporting procedure, in June, 1799, at their annual meeting. At that meeting, the Presbytery of Bangor, of which I was a member, made the following report, equally modest, and correct. "The Rev. William Steel Dickson hath been, from the beginning of June, 1798, a state-prisoner, and is now such, at Fort-George, in the Highlands of Scotland."

This report simply states a fact; a fact, too, with which the Synod of Ulster had no concern, except in their assumed character of inquisitors of

of state, as no application from my congregation, had been made to Presbytery, complaining of my absence, or charging me with crime. Their only application was to be supplied with preachers, each Lord's day, for whose services they punctually paid. While the Presbytery, therefore, reported my confinement, they wisely and candidly left the cause of that confinement even unhinted at. They acted on the knowledge that every man is, and ought to be, deemed innocent till convicted of crime; that conviction should rest on evidence; that no evidence to convict me of any crime had ever been produced; that, if it had, they were not competent to judge, pronounce sentence, or inflict punishment, in cases of treason or sedition; that these powers were vested in government alone, in whose hands I then was, and whose willingness to detect treason, and punish traitors, could not be doubted. But, not so the General Synod. Under what influence, or on what authority, they judged and wrote, I do not say; but, be these what they might, they unequivocally, and without reserve, assign the causes of my confinement. Their minute, in their newly adopted Tyburn phraseology, runs thus: "It appears" (viz. from the reports of the several Presbyteries) "that of the comparatively small number, who have *been implicated in treasonable and seditious practices*, two only, one a member, the other a probationer, have been executed; *two* are still

in *confinement;* some have expressed their sincere contrition: others are no longer connected with the Synod; and the remainder have, either voluntarily, or by permission of government, removed from the kingdom."

How much of this synodical minute may be totally useless, as inapplicable to the purposes either of correction by ecclesiastical discipline, or restraint by the terrors of the law, I leave its authors and the world to judge. How delicate, how just, how consistent with the character of servants of a God of mercy, and Ministers of a religion of love, to charge brethren unconvicted, untried, unaccused by any public functionary, nay denied trial, which they challenged, in order not to remove the *suspicion*, but expose the *pretext*, under which they were suffering the severest of punishments, as involving the ruin of their families, every man *may* judge, and all *who think will* judge. That all the persons alluded to in the preceding minute are unequivocally represented as having been actually "*implicated in treasonable and seditious practices*," must be obvious to every eye; that the two then in confinement, *of which I was one*, were included in the number, cannot be denied, that I had neither been convicted, tried, or in any official manner charged with treason or sedition, is beyond a doubt; nay, I hope, I have proved, that neither grounds of conviction, trial

trial, or criminal charge, could be procured against me. Yet, my rev. fathers and brethren have asserted my guilt, as "implicated in treason and sedition." Now, what is the plain English of this assertion, as addressed to the government of the country? Is it not, "your spies and your informers, who swarm over the land as locusts, not to devour the then tender shoots of vegetating rebellion; but, pampered by your bounty, to destroy the innocent, have blinded your eyes and perverted your judgments. You see not the real traitors, and you sleep over your instruments of torture and of death. Our unworthy brother Dickson and his associates are feasting at the expence of his Majesty and the state, while their bodies should have been rotting in the earth, or suspended on gibbets, as sport for the winds, or food for birds of prey. To us "IT APPEARS that they were "implicated in treasonable and seditious practices," and, on our apparitions and visions, we assert the fact, and, by our conduct, will maintain it."

Had this disclosure been made to the representative of Majesty, the minister of the day, the privy council, or any proper officer or in court; and had it been followed up by substantial evidence, too much honor could not have been done to the authors. But, alas: this was not the case. However unqualified the terms,

in which the charge of sedition and treason is laid on my shoulders, the record of Synod acknowledges that it had no other foundation than the *Presbyterial reports* then made; the only one of which, wherein my name is mentioned, and which I have already quoted, contains no such charge. However true, therefore, the charge, in itself, may have been, that it is found in, or appears from, the report of the Presbytery of Bangor, or any other report given in to Synod, *is not true*. The Presbytery merely states, "that I had been a state-prisoner from June 1798, and, in June 1799, was such at Fort George." My having been implicated in seditious and treasonable practices must, therefore have been a gratuitous assumption of some bold commentator, or visionary hierophant, who can discover meanings never intended, and, in reveries, dreams, and visions, contemplate as realities what never had existence. On the supposition that there might be a few such commentators and seers in the Synod of Ulster, I was willing to conclude, that, through inadvertency, or the respect commonly paid to such, it had been taken for granted that the words "state prisoners" necessarily implied "crimes against the state;" and consequently, that, I, being a state-prisoner, must have been "implicated in treasonable and seditious practices." This conclusion, however, I was obliged to abandon, from a regard to my fathers,

and

and brethren, as commentators on, and expounders of, words more sacred than any report of the Bangor Presbytery. For were this admitted, malice might suggest that, on the same principles, they might be supposed capable of being betrayed by inadvertence, seduced by designing knaves, overawed by imperious rulers, or influenced by hopes or fears, to admit that the most dignified character ever exhibited to mortal eye had actually been implicated in the treasonable, seditious, blasphemous, and dæmoniacal practices, of which he was accused by suborned informers, and, for the imputation of which, he was maliciously, barbarously, and insultingly put to death. This is more than supposition. The very fact has been realized. And, what has once taken place may certainly take place again, in the same or similar circumstances.

Be this as it may, that the Synod did judge rashly, and express themselves unguardedly in 1799, I positively assert. Nay, I assert, even farther, that, had they been in possession of all the information ever pretended to be obtained against me, notwithstanding all the exertions which were made, powers strained, boons granted, and terrors displayed, in order to procure it, their language would have been unwarranted, and unwarrantable. Magin does not even mention my name, before the day on which I

was

was made prisoner; and, then, so far from insinuating that I was present at, or connected with any of the meetings, whose transactions, he, or his rev. Amanuensis, so minutely details, he only mentions a report reaching some distant place, even before my arrest, *that I had been arrested the day before*, and that the people of Ballinahinch were of opinion that they could rescue me. Of Hughes nothing need be said, after what I have already demonstrated; or rather, what he and Magin have demonstrated for me. That is, that their fables neither agree with one another; nor that of either with itself; and that, if they did agree, a single sentence to my disadvantage could not be extracted from them.

On the strength of this, I assert farther still, that unless the Synod of Ulster, in 1799, were in possession of clearer evidence of my criminality than government, though full of eyes within and without, could discover, or the committees of lords and commons pretend to have discovered, their statement that I was implicated in "treasonable and seditious practices" is a groundless and malicious calumny, in respect to them—that the man, who dictated it, dictated a falsehood—that the clerk, who recorded it in their books, recorded a falsehood---that while it remains on the face of their books uncontradicted and uncancelled, they are the foster-fathers

foster-fathers of a falsehood. To wipe off this imputation now lies with them; and this may be done, either by proving my guilt, or acknowledging their own error by cancelling their minute.

That I was one of the members alluded to as then in confinement, is ascertained by the following act of the same meeting, in 1799, founded on an inquiry by the rev. Mr. Black. "Mr. Black having asked the opinion of the Interloquitor, respecting the payment of the R. D. to the two members of our body, now in confinement; after reasoning on the subject at some length, the question was put, "suspend, for the present, or not." The roll was called and it carried "suspend." In consequence, the R. D. then due me, and what afterwards became due, previous to the dissolution of the connexion between me and the congregation of Portaferry, in November, 1799, and that of the rev. John Smyth, of Kilrea, until his liberation, were suspended.

This not only ascertains the fact, that I was one of those charged by the Synod with "treasonable and seditious practices," but suggests some questions not unimportant to the Presbyterian body.

J. Does

1. Does the suspension, or modification of royal bounty, come within the jurisdiction of the Synod of Ulster, by any power derived from the crown?

2. If not, in suspending its payment from Ministers holding congregations, do they not overstretch their authority, as a body merely ecclesiastical?

3. If the distribution, or suspension of bounty, be limited by the crown, or reserved exclusively to the crown, or its representatives, is not every interference in its distribution, or its suspension, without special warrant, an usurpation of the prerogatives of the crown, or the powers vested in its representatives?

That every man may be enabled, at least to think, if not to judge, rationally, of these questions, I subjoin the words of his Majesty's letter for £1000 additional bounty in 1783, and the Lord Lieutenant's warrant for its distribution. The grant is in the following words; "Our will and pleasure is, and we do hereby authorise and require that you do give the necessary directions for placing an additional sum of one thousand pounds per annum upon the civil establishment of our said kingdom of Ireland, under the head of nonconforming ministers, to be distributed *among such of the nonconforming*

nonconforming Ministers, by warrant from our *Lord Lieutenant* or other *chief governor* or *governors* for the time being, in such manner as he or they shall find necessary *for our service* and the *good* of our said kingdom; to commence from the 25th. day of December, 1783, and *to continue during our pleasure:* and, for so doing this shall be as well to you as to all others our officers and ministers, who shall or may be concerned herein a sufficient warrant." The Lord Lieutenant's warrant to his Majesty's auditor-general of this kingdom, or his deputy, is in the same words, and evidently confines the distribution of bounty to the discretion of the Lord Lieutenant, &c. &c. in such manner "*as he or they may find necessary for his Majesty's service, and the good of his kingdom.*" And, as, I presume, succeeding grants have been made on the same terms, with the same views, and subject to similar control, on its authority I leave the preceding questions with my readers.

I have now to observe, that the system of which this act was a part, had been in practice for some time, but without effect. In May, 1799, the rev. Andrew Craig, at a meeting of Presbytery, proposed that the connection between Dr. Dickson and the congregation of Portaferry should be dissolved, and recommended it warmly to the commissioners from that place to send persons to a meeting of

Presbytery to be holden in Donaghadee, on the Tuesday in June, with a supplication to that effect. In this, he was seconded by the rev. David Taggart; (now no more) but warmly opposed by every other member of Presbytery, and by the commissioners, though his proposal was enforced by a terrifying declaration, on the authority of a *confidential person*, " that a great man *high in office* wondered much that such a traitor should have the R. D. continued to him," adding that " if it was not withdrawn *they themselves* would be considered as *inimical to government*."

The failure of this attempt, at second hand, no doubt, gave rise to the inquiry of Mr. Black, the *confidential person*, respecting the payment of R. D. &c. &c. and from the species of argument, adduced by Mr. Craig, the mode of reasoning by which the question " suspend, or not," was carried in the affirmative, may be more than guessed at. But, be the reasoning what it may, the vote of suspension was carried, and proclaimed, in the minute of the meeting, as a warning to all the brethren : " Here hangs the R. D. of a traitor."

Immediately after this meeting of Synod, every mean was used to circulate the knowledge of this suspension among the people of Portaferry, to convince them that the Synod had been

been obliged to withdraw it, in their own vindication, and to secure their own bounties; and to impress them with apprehensions of a severe scrutiny into their conduct, during the Insurrection in 1798, if they did not abandon all connection with me.

By these and other means the end was accomplished, with great difficulty, in November 1799, but, not without hope, that the connection would be renewed, on my liberation. With what took place, respecting the choice and ordination of a successor in my absence, (a young man of taste, learning, and unblemished character,) as the public have no concern, I shall not trouble my readers. I shall only say that, after my return, he generously offered to resign the congregation in my favor, which I would not allow on any account; but, particularly, as I was undetermined whether I would continue in Ireland. Indeed, some time afterwards, I had serious thoughts of removing to America; and, probably would have done so, had it not been for what I have already related of the rev. John Cleland's proposals to David Thompson. The apprehension that my removal would have been represented as an acknowledgment of guilt, and attributed to fear, rivetted me to my country.

But to return to the general Synod. If I can credit individuals, members of the body, and men of character unimpeachable, the suspension of bounty did not satisfy Mr. Black and his friends. A motion was made, seconded and reasoned on, that I should be suspended, and, consequently cut off from the body. This, notwithstanding the terror of the times, was rejected by a small majority, though upwards of thirty suspended between principle and fear, withheld their votes. Of this, I own, there is no mention in the minutes of Synod. But this does not invalidate the evidence on which I mention it, as few rejected motions, not immediately affecting discipline, are there recorded. Besides, it derives a kind of side-wind evidence from a similar attempt of Mr. Craig, before mentioned, after the dissolution of my connexion with the congregation of Portaferry, to have my name expunged from the Presbytery's book, because *I had ceased to hold a congregation in their bounds.* Of this I can have no doubt, as I had the pleasure of laughing at his puny attempt to plead the incompetency of the same Presbytery to receive a call for me, in 1803, to my present congregation, for the very same reason.

I have now to mention another matter seemingly problematical, and of which also I can produce only circumstantial evidence. This is,

is, that a motion was made, and carried, by a small majority, to cut me off from the list of subscribers to the fund for supporting the widows and children of Presbyterian Ministers; and thereby excluding my family from the benefits thereof, though I had been a contributor for 27 years. This was done on the strength of a motion passed, at the meeting of Synod, in 1797, "that any Minister, a contributor to the widow's fund, *on his leaving this kingdom*, shall no longer be considered as connected with said fund."

Plain people would certainly think that the "leaving the kingdom," here mentioned, must have been a voluntary act, in order to incur the penalty. But, how my being carried out of the kingdom by a military guard, and under the escort of an armed ship, could be considered as voluntary, they will not easily conceive. Such an Idea could occur, only to such learned and ingenious expositors, as have already been alluded to in another case.

That this has also been omitted in the records of Synod, I grant; but I appeal to the Synod, as a body, if it did not take place. If they deny it, I shall admit that I have been imposed on. However, the following circumstance gives it a strong appearance of probability. In 1800, Mrs. Dickson wrote an expostulatory letter to that rev. body, which, being read

read from the pulpit by the rev. John Bankhead, their moderator, excited no small degree of irritation in some delicate breasts; but afterwards produced a declaration, which appears in their records, " that the *peculiar circumstances* of Dr. Dickson did not militate against any rule of Synod; and that, on paying up arrears and £405 per annum, he might be *continued* a contributor." Whether these words shew a previous exclusion from being a contributor, and consequently, the exclusion of my family from every prospect of benefit from the fund, I leave my readers to judge.

Here, let me pause—as here, for a season, the operations of Synod, respecting me, came to a stand; and, as will appear, merely for want of matter and opportunity. I cannot, however, on reviewing the acts, which I have mentioned, pass unnoticed some circumstances which they present.

1. No official notice was taken, or judgment pronounced, by the Synod, respecting my seditious or treasonable practices, during the ten months of my confinement in Ireland, though a meeting was holden, at which the names of others were entered on their records, as stigmatized with treason and sedition.

2 Three months after my banishment to a distant prison, in another country, where I could neither witness, nor hear of, their proceedings, till my family were languishing under the penalty inflicted by them, they pronounced and executed sentence against me; and that, without having examined a witness, quoted a report, or alleged the shadow of a reason for such sentence, except that Mr. Black had asked their opinion concerning the payment of the R. D. to the two members in confinement."

3. That, in pronouncing and executing this sentence, they, not only confounded the distinct, and strictly defined, powers of church and state, but spurning the ecclesiastical chair, and giving all its wholesome correctives—its admonitions, its rebukes, its censures, suspensions, and degradation, to the winds—usurped the vice-regal throne, and exercised a power over the royal bounty, which the then existing grants vest, *exclusively*, in the representative of Majesty, or lord's justices for the time being.* In

* In the preceding charge of usurpation, I am more than warranted, if possible, by Dr. Black and twenty-eight of his *friends*, as will afterwards appear. In 1806, commissioners were appointed by the Synod, "to suggest to the Lord Lieutenant, the propriety, &c. of an equalization of the royal bounty." Against this suggestion, a protest was entered on the books and signed, alleging a variety of reasons, of which the following is one.

III. "Because

In fact, they seem to have forgotten that the power of the keys is confined to the order, discipline, and government of the church—that crimes are cognizable by it, not as they affect the state, or its members, or are punishable by fine, imprisonment, or death; but as they occasion injury, scandal, or reproach, to the church, its members, or religion: and that, when its sentences expose to privation of civil rights, or infliction of civil penalties, it is not by any laws merely ecclesiastical, but by the laws of the state, and the authority of the civil magistrate.

4 Be it remembered that, in 1793, the Synod "besought his majesty to accept the faithful exertions of those who had withstood the torrent of popular fury, and the seductions of sophistical philosophy, as an atonement for their deluded

III. "Because, we cannot suggest to the representative of our Sovereign the *propriety* of depriving one-third of the Ministers of this Synod of a considerable portion of an income, of which they have, for some years, been in possession, *on the faith of his Majesty's government*, "that the bounty, once granted, shall *in no case be withdrawn from any Minister during his continuance in his congregation, so long as it shall please his Majesty to continue the bounty to the body at large,*" in reliance on which many Ministers have formed their domestic arrangements, and commenced a course of education for their families."

This is language so plain, implies an avowal so clear, and admits an authority so strong, in support of my charge of usurpation, that I shall not insult my readers by adding a single remark on the subject.

deluded brethren: and, that the madness of the multitude might be hidden from his eyes by the courage and sufferings of those of their communion, who fought and died for their king and country—their liberty and religion." Now, though it may be a doubt whether the odour of this sacrifice had reached his majesty's nostrils, or the words of this intercessorry prayer met his eye, yet true it is, that the supposed delinquents, of which I was one, were accommodated by his majesty's ministers, in a manner which no man of £1000 per annum could afford to accommodate his own family; which the *atoning* priests, who pleaded the sacrifice of their own exertions against popular fury and sophistical philosophy, and the courage and sufferings of those of their communion as an expiation for the sins of their deluded brethren, were, not only withholding the means of support justly due to their families, but cutting off their prospects of future comfort, though faithfully purchased—nay more, as casting a shade of suspicion over their verbal sacrifice and prayer, by declaring what the *real* ministers of the object of their worship could not prove;—that the "*deluded*," as they tenderly called them, were actually "*traitors and rebels*."

Other observations will occur to the thinking reader, and of no mean importance, which I shall here omit. There is one, however, which

might be made, and which I think it my duty to preclude. In the conduct of the rev. Body, of which I have yet the honor to be a member, I have charged the severities, of which I complain, to "*the Synod.*" This I have done, because every Synodical act must be considered as the act of "the whole Synod." However, I am fully convinced, that not one in ten were active in, or really approved of, things then done. The day was a day of terror. There were ends to answer, by keeping up that terror. The Synod was pronounced to me, by Mr. Pollock, to be a hoard of traitors. They were made to believe, that they were a *suspected body*, and that exertions must be made to remove that suspicion. These suspicions were avowed by some members of the body, and every one, who presumed to say a word favorable to an accused, or suffering brother, was borne down by an insinuation that he was an accomplice, or might expose himself to suspicion as such. The truth of this is so well known, that, I believe it will not be denied; nay, I believe, from what I have personally heard, more than once, it cannot be denied.

I have already mentioned two instances of these personal exertions. The one was the motion, by Mr. Craig, of my being continued in the receipt of R. D. at the risque of the Presbytery being considered as "inimical to government,"

ment," the other of Mr. Black, in respect to bounty also. Who brought forward the motion of my suspension, and exclusion from continuing a coutributor to the widow's fund, which I have mentioned, only as problematical, my evidence, though strong, not being direct, I know not. But there is a notice, which cannot be overlooked, proposed by Mr. Cuming, brother-in-law to Mrs. Black, which resolves the whole of these proceedings into one connexion. It is expressed in the following words: " Mr. Thomas Cuming gave notice that he will next year move, that, if any contributor to the widow's fund shall die by suicide, duelling, or the hand of public justice, his widow or family shall not be considered as entitled to any advantage arising from the said fund."

That the object of this notice was in itself right, had it been confined to such as might become contributors in future, must be admitted; but, that it should have a retrospect to such as then were, and long had been contributors, is not right. In several charter-parties of annuity companies the widows and children of such as died by suicide or duelling are excluded from all benefits. Indeed they are crimes so heinous, unnatural, and hurtful to society, that too much cannot be done to discourage and prevent them. However, that the prevention of these was not the only, or even

principal object of Mr. Cuming's motion, Mr. Cuming has fully proved by the reasons for withdrawing his notice in 1780. His words are: "although the melancholy circumstances of the times did, in his opinion, fully justify the adoption of said motion, yet, as *the case*, which *gave principal rise* to the notice, was *new* and *unprecedented*; and, as the consideration of this melancholy subject must be painful to the feelings of this Synod, and to his own; and as, he trusts, an occasion will not again recur calling for that or any similar regulation, he will, with the consent of this interloquitor, decline making his intended motion."

These words are very explicit, and do credit to Mr. Cuming's candor, on the occasion. They shew that the words, "suicide and duelling," had only crept into his notice, of the preceding year, through inadvertence, or the confusion of ideas arising from the "melancholy circumstances of the times." He tells us, that the case, which gave *principal* rise to his notice, was *new* and *unprecedented*, and the subject *melancholy*—now, there was no case of suicide or fatal duel, among the contributors to the widow's fund, *new* or *old*, *precedented* or *unprecedented*; nor any instance of a contributor to that fund dying by the hand of *public justice*, from its commencement until the year 1798. Hence, that one instance must be the case, which

which gave rise to Mr. Cuming's notice. That case, I own, was *new* and *unprecedented*; nor have I any doubt but the *subject* will yet appear more melancholy than it has hitherto done: and my prayer to God is not only, that such a case may never more present itself, but that an individual may never be born, of the race of men, unguarded enough to hazard such a notice on such a case, should it unfortunately recur.

Of this case, melancholy as it was, and more melancholy as it was attempted to be made, my feelings induce me to add something more. Previous to Mr. Cuming's notice, a motion was made, in Synod, that the widow of the member who fell a victim to the public justice of 1798—a woman of most excellent character, and a numerous family of amiable children, should be excluded from the benefits of the widow's fund, on account of the husband's and father's political offences. This motion was supported by the FEW with great zeal. One rev. gentleman, *notorious* for humility, conciliating manners, and soundness in the faith, when every other argument was borne down by justice and common-sense, pleaded the disgrace of having the widow of a rebel in the list of annuitants with the relicts of loyal, faithful, and pious men, in favor of her exclusion. However, the motion did not pass. Hence, Mr. Cuming's sweeping

sweeping notice was brought forward, which on the following year, he was pleased to withdraw.

That the Synod, thus far, proceeded on principles truly loyal, or to avoid and counteract suspicions of disloyalty, shall be taken for granted, as no immediate interference, or influence, of men in power was openly avowed. However, from this period, policy and interest seem to have joined issue with loyalty to render it triumphant over the artifices of seduction, and delusions of a "sophistical philosophy, which threaten alike, the temporal, and eternal interests of mankind" God grant that the triumph may be complete, as the victory must be equally honorable, and beneficial to the human race.

It will be remembered that on the restoration of the country to something like tranquility, after the partial insurrection into which it had been, *somehow*, *seduced* or *provoked* in 1798, the business of union was taken up, and zealously prosecuted. To its success the insurrection, as originally intended, was a favorable prelude. The terror of the succeeding times was equally in its favor. But, as the measure was very unpalatable to the Irish people, that terror could not be safely depended on. Hence, to procure a *silent acquiescence*, during the discussion,

sion, the people were to be treated, not only with prospects of forgiveness for the past; but favor and liberality in all time to come. The Catholics, the great mass of the Irish people, are very much attached to their clergy. They look upon them as their *almost* only sources of comfort, under their multiplied grievances, for ages, in this country. They must, therefore, be supposed happy in the prospect of their independence, and more so, in that of their wealth. This, the then governors of Ireland perceived, and proposed a provision for the clergy, on condition of their *silence*, and other *terms*, some of which are yet undefined, and others never denied. Those proposals came in a form so flattering, and were sanctioned by an authority so high, that, if we can credit report, the Catholic clergy were nearly *deluded* into a snare in which they would have been *suspended* in infamy, for ever, and their bishops seduced to the brink of a precipice, over which, if they had fallen, they would have fallen unpitied. However, they saw their danger ere it was too late. They recoiled, and now stand on an eminence so high, and solidly founded, that they must be looked up to, with a mixture of shame, admiration, and envy.

On the same principles, and with similar inducements, the Presbyterians in Ulster, the second people in the THEN kingdom, were assailed, through the rev Robert Black, their agent

agent for royal bounties. From this office, he must be supposed to have some intercourse with the Irish servants of the crown. When that intercourse became *confidential*, I shall not presume to say; but that it was confidential, and that it referred to forgiveness of injuries, real or supposed---to granting or procuring future conciliation, and the extensions of bounty, *on terms*, is evident from Mr. Black's words, to the Synod, in 1780. These words are as follow: "Mr. Black informed the Synod, that he had waited on lord Castlereagh, BY DESIRE, when he was informed by his lordship, that it was the intention of his majesty's ministers to make a provision for the dissenting clergy, in *terms different from those on which the present R. D. was paid to them*, and that his lordship had expressed a desire that the Synod would appoint one or more of their number to confer with government on this subject. Mr. Black farther stated that as *an individual*, he was *honored* with much conversation, relative to the general concerns of the Synod, and found the dispositions of government, in his judgment, *liberal, conciliatory*, and *satisfactory*."

These are the words of the Synod's minute, and which, I presume, when the circumstances of the times are considered, comment is unnecessary. The same minute informs us that, "in consequence of this information, the rev. John

John Bankhead moderator, Mr. Black and Dr. Little were appointed commissioners to communicate with government on this subject."

This commission must have been speedily executed, as the synod met early in October following, to receive the report of the commissioners. What their report was; or rather, what their reports were, does not appear. That they differed, in some important points, is admitted; and, that the mode of distributing the bounty, when augmented, was not approved of by the body, I believe, is equally certain. What peculiar changes may have been proposed during the years 1801 and 1802, I shall not presume to say; but that, finally, presented from government, for the adoption of the Synod, in 1803, at the fullest meeting, I believe, ever known, was, that the Synod should be divided into three classes—that the ministers holding the best endowed and most numerous congregations, sixty two in number, should receive £100 each—that the ministers of the sixty two, next in number and stipend, should receive £75,—and the remaining sixty two £50. In order to prepare for the discussion of this proposal, a census of the numbers and stipend of each congregation was taken, and returned to some officer, I know not whom, by which the proposed classification was regulated. Matters being thus arranged, the measure was discussed, as I have

said, in 1803, with more warmth, and carried with greater difficulty, than ever was known in that body. That it was carried by a very small majority, and continued to be highly disapproved, is evident, from a motion passed in 1806, by a respectable majority, in the following words: " moved that the members appointed to wait on the lord lieutenant be instructed humbly to suggest to his grace, the *propriety*, the *policy*, and the *advantage*, of an *equalization* of his majesty's bounty, comprehending the two congregations which at present receive no bounty." The members above alluded to, as " appointed to wait on the lord lieutenant," were the moderator, the ministers of the Presbytery of Dublin, Mr.---now doctor---Black, and Mr. Thomas Henry. For what reason I know not, the appointment of " the ministers of Dublin and Dr. Black, was retracted, and others nominated in their place. Against the instructions given to these gentlemen, twenty nine entered their protest. Hence a presumption arises, that they had been, from the beginning, patrons and promoters of the system. Nor is this presumption weakened by a curious fact. This is, of that of eight members, who protested against retracting the appointment of the Dublin ministers, as part of an embassy, to suggest to his excellency, the *propriety*, *policy*, and advantages, of equalizing the R. D. these very Dublin ministers, *Dr. M'Dowell* and the

rev.

rev. James Horner, were two. Whether these same ministers, or one of them, in company with Dr. Black, anticipated the approach of the commissioners, by whom they were superseded, to the ear or other organs of vice-royalty, they can best tell. To them, therefore, I refer my readers. But, be that as it may, the commissioners, in reporting their embassy, make no mention of their *gracious* reception at the castle, or the attention paid to their suggestions. That report is very concise, and suggests some instruction. " Dr. William Neilson, the late moderator, read a report of the manner in which he and his fellow-commissioners, appointed to wait on the lord lieutenant, had executed their commission; upon which it was moved and unanimously agreed to, that thanks be returned to the commissioners for the *faithful* manner in which they had executed their commission. Thanks were returned from the chair accordingly.

Dr. Neilson read also the lord lieutenant's answer to our address of last year, likewise a letter from Mr. secretary Elliot, in answer to the application of the Synod for an *equalization of his majesty's bounty*, which were ordered to be inserted in the minutes, and are as follows.

LORD LIEUTENANT'S ANSWER.

The ministers and elders of the general Synod of Ulster are entitled to my best thanks, for the cordiality with which they express their satisfaction at my appointment to the government of this part of the united kingdom. I can assure them that it shall ever be the most important object of my administration, as it is the most anxious wish of my heart, to secure to *every class* and *description* of his majesty's subjects in Ireland, all the *blessings connected with civil and religious liberty*: and it will give me sincere pleasure to convey to our most gracious sovereign the assurances contained in the address now presented to me, of gratitude for his paternal care, and loyal attachment to his sacred person and government.

THE SECRETARY'S ANSWER.

Dublin Castle, 26th. July, 1806.

SIR,

His grace, the lord lieutenant, having given the most mature deliberation to the suggestions which you were deputed to communicate to him, in respect to the arrangement of the *regium donum*, and having also taken the sentiments of his majesty's confidential servants on the subject, I am commanded to acquaint you, for the information of the respectable persons who compose the Presbyterian Synod of Ulster, that

that it is not judged advisable to recommend to his majesty any alteration in the mode at present adopted in the distribution of that fund.

I have the honour to be
Sir,
your most obedient humble servant,
W. ELLIOT."

THE REV. DR. NEILSON,
Dundalk.

These two documents are of some importance as they go to establish two facts.

1. That his grace of Bedford, as representative of majesty, pledges himself to secure the " blessings of civil and religious liberty to every class and description of his majesty's subjects in Ireland."

Of this I shall only observe that were this pledge redeemed by securing these blessings to the Irish people, Ireland would be a land of peace and joy, the union with Britain less irksome, and the British isles invulnerable by an enemy.

2. That the continuance of classification, though pronounced by the Synod, in 1806, " improper, impolitic, and disadvantageous," was persevered in, not by his majesty's command, but on the opinion of his majesty's confidential

fidential servants, that it was not advisable to recommend to his majesty any alteration in the mode of distributing the Regium Donum, then adopted."

This sketch I have here inserted, though some may think it out of place, to shew that the present mode of distributing the royal bounty was, not only disagreeable to, but opposed by, a numerous and respectable portion of the ministers of the Synod. Whether merit or demerit may attach to its promoters and advocates, it is but justice to them and the Synod, that their names should be made known, as far as may be done with correctness. To this end, the protest of 1806 against instructing the members, appointed to wait on the lord lieutenant, to suggest to his grace the propriety &c. of an equalization of his majesty's bounty, is the only guide of which I know, which may be depended on; and their names are as follow:

Ben. M'Dowel D. D.
Robert Black D. D.
Robert Rentoul,
Samuel Barber,
John M'Cann,
John Thom,
Andrew Craig,
George Hay,
William Moreland,
Thomas M'Kay,
Thomas Cuming,
William Monteith,
Hugh Brooke,
Sam Cuthbertson,
Joseph Osborne,
John Whiteside,
John Davison,
Josiah Ker,
William Hamilton,
James Horner,
William Ramsay,
Robert Orr,
William Dunlop
Henry Elder,
Alex. Montgomery,
Henry Simson,
Benjamin Mitchel,
William Moore,
Samuel Watson,

That

That many others were connected with these, in 1803, is certain; and that many continued occasionally to vote with them, in the same cause, is not to be doubted. Yet, these gentlemen admit in the second reason for the protest, to which their names are signed, that *twenty nine only* voted against it, though the meeting consisted of *eighty six;* and that, of *twenty* elders, they were supported, *only*, by *four*. That, of these twenty nine, all attached to classification, and to each other, the rev. Dr. Black and Dr. Dowel, with Messrs. Horner, Cuming, and the rev. John Thompson, unfortunately absent on this occasion, were the most conspicuous leaders. In the privations, of which I have complained as grievances, and some other efforts respecting widows &c. Dr. Black and Mr. Cuming only are mentioned, the one as a *querist*, the other as an intended *mover*. That they continued so in some others, of which I am now to complain, I shall endeavour to shew.

After a liberation from prison, unsolicited by me, or any other person on my behalf, and a most respectful convoy, at the expense of government, to my friends and family, among other marks of approving kindness, the numerous and respectable congregation of Donegor, expressed, through a number of their members, some of which had known me from my boyish days, a warm desire that I would become successor

cessor to their then minister, a venerable old man, but sinking under infirmity. On this subject I demurred, though he warmly encouraged me to concur with the people's wish, being then undetermined whether I would continue to reside in Ireland. During this delay, the matter was talked of publicly in the country. Some good souls became alarmed with the apprehension of my settling in the neighbourhood. The members of the congregation were told "that any congregation taking me, as their minister, would be excluded from royal bounty. The good old man was *assured* that, if he resigned in my favor, on the Synodical regulation of retaining the bounty for life, he would be left unsupported in his old age, as the bounty would certainly be withdrawn, on my instalment. These, having reached my ear, I immediately removed all uneasiness, from all concerned, in an interview with Wm Owens, Esq. a member of the congregation, the oldest man, I believe, in the country, and of a character, which no man has ever impeached, and few---very few indeed, have equalled. That these reports prevailed---that they were circulated on the authority of a *confidential* person, and that that person was believed to be Dr. Black, agent for the bounty, I firmly believe. How far they had truth to support them, Dr. Black best knows; to him, therefore, I appeal.

However,

However, soon after this, a presumption that Dr. Black and some of his connexions might be concerned in such reports rose towards probability. In the Autumn of 1802, I received an invitation to Keady, within six miles of Armagh, which was immediately followed by a call to take charge of a small congregation there. This gave an immediate alarm. Emissaries were set to work with all the principal people, on every opportunity, to warn them of the ruin they would incur by a connexion with me. The rev. Thomas Cuming was said to be indefatigable. No doubt, more might be said than was really true. But the following fact, which rests on the written authority of a man of truth and honor, and which I have in my possession, is proof sufficient that neither he nor his brother Black was idle, or lukewarm. To prevent suspicion of misrepresentation, I shall state it in the gentleman's own words.

" Some time after the rev. Doctor Dickson was asked to preach for the congregation of Keady, I happened to be in the town of Armagh. There I saw the rev. Messrs. Black and Cuming to whom I made up and saluted them, as *old friends* and *acquaintances* After some ordinary conversation, Mr. Black told me, he had seen my name where he never thought to see it, viz. at a call to the rev. Dr. Dickson to be our stated pastor at Keady. I enquired the reason. He

said, he was not a *loyal* man, as he had been appointed adjutant general to the rebel army at Ballinahinch, and asked me if I had read the reports of the committee of the house of lords relative to him. I said I had not; but although the Doctor was confined he was never brought to trial; and we and every man had a right to deem him *and all in such a situation innocent*, until the laws of their country found them otherwise. He, Dr. Black said that, as to his being concerned in the rebellion and guilty of improper conduct therein, he had no manner of doubt; and the reason he was not tried was, that the person, who had given their lordships information against the Doctor had made it a point not to be brought forward to *swear as a witness* on the trial. I then alleged that any designing villain might deprive me or any loyal man of his liberty when he made points at the time of giving such information; and that it appeared to me the Doctor was *persecuted* when not prosecuted. Doctor Black said, "*If he was to become the stated pastor of Keady it would be the greatest stigma on the Presbyterian cause that ever he knew to happen.*" In return, I said, I had no doubt of the Doctor's loyalty, and, if he accepted of our small new congregation, it would be a high gratification to me, and I hoped he would be my minister during my life. Mr. Black said, he had no doubt of the Doctor's accepting the congregation, if he was offered it,

but

but said that we were the last people he ever thought would have given *such a man* a call. I am ready and willing to swear that a conversation to the effect of the above statement took place between Dr. Black and me, in the street of Armagh, between the time the Doctor first preached at Keady and the time he let us know he would accept the call of said congregation.

Mr. Cuming told a story relative to Dr. Dickson's baptizing a child for some person in the county of Down, I think, near Ballinahinch. He named the man, and said he had travelled with him to a former Synod, but I forget his name. This person should have told Mr. Cuming that after the Doctor had baptized his child and *pleasantly spent the evening*, on going away, he went to see the Doctor on horseback, and the Doctor there told him "*perhaps he would never see him again, and that this was a day or two before the disturbance broke out at Ballinahinch.*" I thought, by the conversation, Mr. Cuming meant to shew me, *the Doctor took guilt to himself as being a rebel.*"—This also I am willing to swear if called upon."

This written document, if genuine, and I hereby pledge myself to prove it such, renders it, not only *probable*, but *highly probable*, that presumption was not too bold in ascribing the reports, which I have mentioned to the rev. Dr.

Black and his connexions. The efforts attributed to Dr. Black are of such a complexion that his object cannot be mistaken; and, though Mr. Cuming's *story* displays as much childishness, in substance as ingenuity in the application, it can hardly be doubted that his object was the same.

That the written document, which I have copied, is genuine, admits of proof as clear as any thing of the kind possibly can do. Mr. Samuel Cuming, the writer, was born in the congregation of Keady. He was a man, not only highly respected, but of a character the most amiable, and pleasing manners. From an early period of his life he had resided in the village, and during many years had been agent for lord Farnham, landlord of the place, and surrounding country; and seneschal of the manor, which embraces a tract of country vastly more extended. Hence, his hand-writing must be well known to every respectable land-holder; to every gentleman, many of whom are his relatives; and every man of business, in the neighbourhood; which hand-writing I have in my possession.

As this enables me to ascertain the authenticity of the document, I have what appears to me, sufficient proof that it was not written from prejudice, ill-will, or any other unworthy motive.

tive. Mr. Cuming says, " he went up and saluted" his namesake Cuming and Dr. Black, not only as *old* acquaintances but *friends*." That he was, and long had been, a warm friend to Dr. Black was well known. The Doctor, when a young man, had been a candidate for the congregation of Keady. On that occasion Mr. Cuming supported him, not only by his vote, but by all the influence which his public situations gave him in the congregation ; and frequently regretted that his exertions were vain. After the above interview, I have often heard him relate these exertions, and at the same time declare, that nothing but that interview, ever gave him a suspicion that he had mistaken his man, and that his friendship had been misplaced. Whenever this subject was mentioned he became irritated ; and when it became known, after the meeting of Synod, in 1803, that Keady was excluded from a share in the royal bounties, he attributed the exclusion, without reserve, to his two old " friends and acquaintances" Dr. Black and Mr. Cuming. In this opinion I believe, few, if any, of his neighbours differed from him. Under this impression, some were for libelling them as slanderers, and others for having a memorial presented to the lord lieutenant, complaining of partiality, and praying that they might be admitted to a participation of the royal bounty. Both these measures I opposed ; the former, as unworthy of a minis-

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ter; the latter, because I was fully determined never to share any royal bounty, *if granted*, in connexion with the Synod, while my name appeared in their records, stained with a positive charge of being "implicated in treasonable and seditious practices."

These being repressed, it was resolved to present a memorial to the Synod, at their meeting in 1804, stating their case, complaining of the contempt and insult with which they were treated, and begging to be informed *explicitly* for what *reasons* they had been so treated. To such as are unacquainted with our discipline, this memorial may not be, either unentertaining, or without interest; and, it will be observed that, in it, the congregation of Keady neither beg a share in the bounties conferred upon their brethren, nor solicit the intercessory influence of the Synod to procure an extension of bounty to themselves. The memorial is as follows:

"REV. SIRS,

We, the congregation of Keady, erected by your authority, in the year 1802, as will appear in your minutes; and, from that date, acting in conformity with the rules of your body, and under the sanction of the rev. the Presbytery of Tyrone, have proceeded to the call of a minister, who was, and is, the object of our unanimous choice, and has been regularly installed as our pastor;

pastor; and to the erection of a meeting-house, which will be completely covered in, before your wisdoms shall have disposed of this our address. In these our proceedings, we have demeaned ourselves as Presbyterians, and considered ourselves as a constituent part of your body, subject to all your rules in discipline and church government, and entitled to an equitable share in all your privileges, royal bounties, parliamentary grants, and imperial favors. It is with heartfelt regret that we feel ourselves obliged to complain that our situation has been overlooked, and our expectations disappointed. This complaint we submit to your wisdom, piety, justice, and regard to the Presbyterian church of Ulster, which, we are confident, ye consider as a part of the church of Christ. We beg leave to ask, with all possible deference, respect and humility, (on the supposition that your late negotiations with the government of this country is to be the support, interest, and honor, of said Presbyterian church) why we have not been included in them? We presume to ask, whether it is because we are not christians in principle, and Presbyterians in discipline: and, whether any person *in*, or out of, your very rev. body, has charged, or will come forward to charge, *us*, *any of us*, or our *respected pastor*, with any *word*, *act*, or *deed*, either as *members of your church*, or *of the state*, on account of which we can, or ought to be, in any particular manner,

manner, stigmatized by you, or precluded the benefit of any bounty, royal, parliamentary, or imperial, intended for the benefit of the Presbyterians of Ulster. Your answer we request with earnestness, and at the same time, with all that respect, with which it becomes humble laity to approach your rev. tribunal.

We hereby appoint-&c. &c."

That there was point in this memorial is evident. That that point was sharpened by the language of Dr. Black and the rev. Mr. Cuming, in the interview already mentioned is certain. Mr. Samuel Cuming did not conceal that language. Hence it was believed and circulated that my being "implicated in seditious and treasonable practices," as the Synod have asserted, was the reason why the congregation of Keady was "overlooked" in the new arrangement for the distribution of King's bounty. The Synod felt this, and that they were directly called upon, in declaring the reason for "overlooking" the congregation of Keady, either to charge themselves with neglect, at least; or the congregation, or minister, or both, with something which rendered them unworthy of that favor. No such charge was made. Dr. Black did not even hint at my "concern in rebellion," "my improper conduct therein," or "any disloyalty of any kind;" much less "of my rank

rank of adjutant general in the rebel army," as the reason, or any part of the reason, of such "*overlook*." In fact there was a silence, uncommon on such occasions, for some minutes. However, after some whispering, a *naturalized alien* arose, and, with great affected violence, reprobated the memorial, as *disrespectful, ironical, insulting*, and moved its rejection. This, the commissioners, by their good temper, prevented. They immediately proposed to expunge the offensive parts, and reduce it to a simple inquiry. This being granted, the reduction was made, and the memorial admitted, in the terms expressed in the Synod's minute, which are as follow: "A paper was presented, from the second congregation of Keady, praying the Synod to give information why it had not been included in the late *negotiations* of the Synod with government; and why it should be precluded the benefit of bounty?"

From this minute, sanctioned as it is, it must be evident to every man that it neither prays for a share in the bounty granted to the Synod of Ulster, nor the *aid* of that body to procure an extension of bounty to the congregation of Keady. They simply ask, "information, why they had not been included in the *negotiations*, and why they were precluded the benefit of the *compact*. With pain inexpressible, I have written the last word, but, it is so neces-

sarily implied in the word, "negotiations," that I could not avoid it. Dr. Black in his report, in the year 1800, of a confidential conversation with the Irish minister, mentions the word "terms." Of these "terms" I know nothing, except what every body knows, that "classification" was one; and what I have mentioned, from the grant of £1783, so different from all former grants, which I have seen, and which conveys the idea of a *bribe*, rather than a *reward*, or encouragement to promote *religious knowledge* and *religious virtue*. The words will be remembered and, I am sure, every Presbyterian ought to remember, and to think of them, carefully and seriously——"to be distributed among SUCH of the non-conforming ministers, *in such manner*, as he or they shall find necessary, *for our service*, and the good of said kingdom." These are the words——and, in my apprehension *ominous* words. When combined with the terms of classification, my fear is, that they involve the death-warrant of Presbyterian independence in their bosom——the prayer of my heart, that that fear may be groundless.*

These

* In this fear, I feel warranted by the late Dr. Campbell, Presbyterian minister of Clonmell, and formerly of Armagh. He was commissioner from the Synod, for several years, in their *negotiations* with government for bounty. Early in 1783, some members of Synod were favoured by communications, through

These things apart, the good temper, and good sense, of the commissioners from Keady,

through the late lord Charlemont, and, I believe, Mr. Stewart of Killymoon, of the liberal dispositions of government towards the body, and encouragement to apply for an additional bounty of £10. 000. The Synod caught at the bait, petitioned, and appointed Dr. Campbell to conduct the *interesting* business. For a time, every thing seemed to promise that the petition would be granted in full. His grace of Portland and the ministry of the day gave it open countenance: but before it could be completed, he was recalled, and lord Northington sent over to occupy the vice-regal throne. With new men, new measures succeeded. Among these, a diminution of the intended grant of bounty was one. To this a tedious and expensive election in a Northern country, in which a great majority of the freeholders are Presbyterians, took place. These, generally, oppose the interests of a noble lord, long connected with government, in support of a family, whom he considered as upstarts. This gave his lordship great offence against the whole body. Hence he opposed the petition of Synod, and had the grant reduced from £10. 000 to £1. 000 per annum. At the same time, however, he procured £5 00 per annum, for another class of Presbyterians, denominated *seceders*—the first with which they had been favored. This diminution of the proposed grant his grace of Portland declared, afterwards, in a letter to lord Charlemont, to be "*foolish and impolitic, as it prevented government of the most valuable purchase, which it ever had an opportunity of making in Ireland.*

These circumstances Dr. Campbell never mentioned, even among his friends, without expressions of regret and disgust, and then with seeming caution. This excited my curiosity. And, as the king's letter had never been read publicly, I repeatedly requested a sight of it, that I might learn the cause of these feelings. This however, he persevered in refusing,

till

gave rise to a perplexity as great as that which gave rise to its display. A kind of confused, desultory, conversation took place, in which no direct answer was attempted. This perplexity was terminated by a lucky observation, " that the Synod had no control over the bounty—*that their hands were tied up, and their mouths shut.*" This declaration was received as oracular; and the following resolution inserted in the minute, as

till I wrote to him in Spring 1789, that if he did not gratify me, I would apply at the secretary of state's office for a copy. Soon after this, he wrote me as follows, enclosiug the document required.

" *Armagh, June 27th.* 1789,

Dr. Doctor,

Enclosed I send you a copy of the king's letter, and of the lord lieutenant's warrant for £1. 000. You will judge *from the nature of the grant,* whether these papers *ought, or ought not,* to be communicated to *all,* or to a *few.*"

This letter I retain, as a valuable relique of a wise and good man: and, as already expressing his apprehension that there was something, *in the nature of this grant,* from which the mind of the Synod would have recoiled.

On this delicate subject, I shall not hazard a single remark. I shall only ask, whether it would not be right that all the Presbyterian ministers, and *all the Presbyterian people,* should know the *terms* on which royal bounties have been, and continue to be, extended to them; and that, in order to this, every letter and warrant by which they are granted or commanded to be distributed, from the days of king Charles 2d. to the present, should be printed and published, for the use of such as may choose to purchase them?

as an answer to the prayer of the people of Keady : " the Synod not considering itself competent, at present, to give the congregation any *aid* in this business, resolved to dismiss the application."

That this was no answer to the people of Keady must be evident to every man pretending to common sense. They neither asked *aid* nor advice in procuring bounty ; but simply " information, why they *had* not been included in the late negotiations and why they *should* be precluded from the benefit of bounty." To neither of these questions, do the words of the Synod apply, or refer, in any manner, direct, or indirect.

When this minute was communicated to the congregation of Keady, they were hurt. After some deliberation, they agreed to renew their application, and, if possible, elicit a direct answer, at the meeting of Synod in 1805. In consequence a memorial was prepared, the same in substance, and nearly in words, with that of 1804, and commissioners appointed to present it.

Previous to that meeting, a new congregation, erected in the country of Derry, posterior to the erection in Keady, had obtained a minister, and brought forward a supplication. The object

object of this supplication was to obtain assistance, from the Synod, in *procuring* a portion of royal bounty. The statement, in the Synodical records, is as follows: " a memorial from the *newly* erected congregation of Newtown-Stewart, praying Synod to take such measures as may induce government to *allow* them a portion of R. D. was presented to the Synod."

From the " manacles" and " muzzles" complained of last year, in the affair of Keady, neither manual effort, nor verbal intercession could be expected, on this occasion, on any principle of consistency, unless these instruments of restraint had been removed. They were not removed. Hence the answer was: " The Synod resolved that it could not interfere in this business."

On the disposal of this memorial, one, from Keady, was immediately brought forward, of the same import with that of the preceding year. The confusion and perplexity, which this impertinent repetition of a simple question occasioned, may be easily conceived from the following minute: " a similar memorial on the part of the newly erected congregation of Keady was withdrawn."

However painful it may be to notice the fact, yet, from respect to the congregation of Keady,

Keady, and to myself, I am obliged to assert that this is a gross misrepresentation. No memorial, *similar* to that from the congregation of Newtown-Stewart, ever was presented, to the Synod, from that of Keady. This I gladly attribute to misapprehension, *arising from surprise and confusion*, rather than to any mean motive, or base design. Yet, I must observe, that the misrepresentation is so gross, that I would not dare to mention it, were I not warranted by the admission of the rev. body by whom it is sanctioned, in the preceding minute.

In the year 1806, I was prevented by illness, from attending Synod; but in 1807 I stated this misrepresentation to the body, which the original memorial proved to be real, consequently, it was corrected as follows, in the minute of that year, with the præfix of a *black* hand, instead of my motion for the purpose:

" Whereas an error appears in section 5th. in the minutes of our sixth" session, in the year 1805, it is ordered that said error be corrected thus:

A petition presented on the part of the new erected congregation of Keady, praying an answer to the following question, viz. " Why were we not included in your negotiations with government respecting bounty ?" was withdrawn.

The

The fact is, this petition was withdrawn, after considerable alteration, from the apparent impossibility of procuring any direct answer to the question which it contained, simplified as it then was.

Situated as I was, it will not be thought strange that I felt hurt by this obstinate silence. I had been branded, by the Synod in 1799 with the charge of "treason and sedition." In 1803, my treasons and seditions were particularly specified, to Mr. Samuel Cuming of Keady, by the rev. Dr. Black; and an acknowledgment of their reality, in the opinion of said Mr. S. Cuming, attempted to be established by the rev. Thomas Cuming, brother-in-law to Dr. Black's lady, and now, through that connexion, *a Presbyterian secretary paid by the crown.* In consequence of these, it must be supposed that many things were surmised, and whispered—nay *openly asserted*—equally painful to my feelings, reproachful to my character, and injurious to my interests. Who could doubt the authority of Dr. Black, with the report of the committee of the house of lords in his *mouth*? Or that of his brother Cuming, supported by the entertaining story of a man totally unknown to him, and, from his character, so respectable, that he would not dare to utter any thing to support Mr. Cuming's insinuations? But, should both these have been doubted, who could

doubt

doubt the solidity of the foundation, or the fullness and clearness of the evidence; on which the rev. Synod of Ulster pronounced me guilty of "seditious and treasonable practices," proceeded to withhold a portion of my family's subsistence, over which viceroyalty alone had any control or, as they pleaded, 1806, "*on the faith of his majesty's government* should not be withdrawn from *any* minister, during his continuance in his congregation, so long as it shall please his majesty to continue the bounty to the body at large." None certainly. Hence, I hope I shall appear warranted in attempting to trample *impossibility* underfoot, by extorting some kind of an answer to the question of the congregation of Keady.

Influenced by this hope, I produced a memorial, on the spur of the moment, and presented it to the rev. Synod, which they were so good as to record in my own words, in the minute of the day.

"A memorial from the rev. William Steel Dickson D. D. requiring the Synod to declare *explicitly* whether or no he is alluded to in a part of a minute of 1799, which has been construed into a reflection on his character, as a man "implicated in treasonable or seditious practices;" and, if so, to explain what they

then meaned by being implicated in practices "treasonable or seditious" was presented to the Synod.

These questions, *I trust* from the circumstances of the case, will be considered as, not only *reasonable*, but *necessary*. That they are plain, and easy of solution, must be evident. I own that, in proposing them, I had two objects in view. The former was to allow my rev. fathers and brethren an opportunity of vindicating their *loyalty*, if not their exceeding the bounds of church-discipline, in accusing, condemning, punishing, and consigning to infamy, (as they supposed) a brother, against whom they never received a charge of guilt, or examined a witness; or of apologizing for their error, by pleading any excuse which they could produce. The latter was to bring forward Dr. Black and his brother Cuming to avow in publick, what the one had asserted, and the other insinuated, *privately*, to Mr. Samuel Cuming to prevent my settlement in Keady.

Notwithstanding the plainness of these questions, and in my opinion, the imperiousness, with which they called for an answer, no answer was conceded to either. The only circumstances, which occurred on the occasion, which I think worth mentioning, was the candid and confident declaration of the rev. Thomas Cuming,

ing, on my complaining of unkind treatment in the efforts to impede my settlement at Keady, " that he had done every thing he *could* to prevent it, and he was sorry he could not do more." The rev. Dr. Black so far as I can recollect, neither offered justification, apology, or explanation. Elsewhere all was silence, or mere whisper. Hence, the resolution was, on the whole of this plain and simple, but not unimportant, business, as expressed in the minute of the day. " *It was* UNANIMOUSLY *resolved to dismiss this memorial.*"

On this answer I shall not make observation, nor pronounce opinion. The world will judge, how far it was consistent with the character of the Synod of Ulster to refuse an answer to a brother, demanding whether he was one of their members against whom they had published an unqualified charge of " treason and sedition," and an explanation of the meaning, which they affixed to the words, when they used them.

From this time (1805) the congregation of Keady ceased to be troublesome. They asked no farther questions, respecting *reasons*, as they might lead to farther *perplexities*. However, the congregation of Newtown-Stewart, *erected posterior to Keady*, renewed their application, five years afterwards, (1800) not to ask " why they were precluded from the benefit of boun-

ty;" but, as formerly, "praying the Synod to use its influence with government in procuring to that congregation a portion of his majesty's bounty."

Happily for them, Keady was now quiescent. Hence, they were not met with the appalling words: "The Synod cannot interfere in this business." The mouths of the body were then unmuzzled, and their hands free from shackles. Hence, their prayer was instantly granted, and the moderator appointed to use the influence prayed for, as appears from the minute of the day: "the prayer of this memorial was granted, and the moderator instructed to draw up a memorial pursuant to the spirit of the supplication of Newtown-Stewart, and have it presented to government in the name of this Synod."

The reception of this memorial was such as might be expected from a government "wise, conciliating, and liberal," and to whose friendship for the Presbyterian body a donation so conducive to the honor and happiness of its ministers has been justly attributed. Its prayer was immediately granted, as appears on the record of 1811. "Mr. Dunlop reported, that he had presented a memorial to the lord lieutenant pursuant to the order of last Synod, praying his excellency to place the congregation of Newtown-Stewart on the list of those who are in the receipt

receipt of his majesty's bounty; and that he had the pleasure of informing the Synod that his excellency had been pleased to grant the prayer of the memorial."

On this my observations shall be few and short. 1st. This comprehension of the congregation of Newtown-Stewart, as appears, was the act of his excellency, *solely* and *exclusively*. 2d. That the erection of the congregation of Newtown-Stewart, posterior to the negotiations with government, relative to the late extension of bounty, was not pleaded by the Synod against presenting a memorial in their favor, nor by his excellency, as an obstacle to its being granted: and, consequently that it could not be the reason, as alleged, but not insisted on, by Dr. Black and some others, in 1804, why that of Keady was not included in that extension. Hence the exclusion of Keady must be attributed to some other reason, or reasons. What these may have been, I leave the world to judge from what I have related.

It will be observed that, from the year 1805, neither the congregation nor minister of Keady, had troubled the Synod with memorial or supplication. In 1810, I advertised a narrative, to be published, of my "confinement and exile," comprehending an account of the "conduct of the rev. the general Synod of Ulster, towards me

me and my family, during and since that period, authenticated by extracts from the records of that rev. body."

On the appearance of this advertisement, a strange alarm was excited, if I may judge from the number of letters with which I was favored. Some of these were merely scurrilous, some added threats; but all were *anonymous*. Others contained friendly cautions and admonitions, to be guarded in my expression, or advice to abandon my idea of publication, as enemies were on the watch, determined to lay hold of the slightest pretext for new severities against me. As the vindication of my character against calumnies, a considerable part of which was founded on, and supported by, synodical records, was my object, on these records I depended for that vindication, and accordingly, applied to the Synod's clerk for such records, and extracts of records, as I deemed necessary for my purpose. These, except in a few instances, were copies of royal grants to the Presbyterians of Ulster, from the days of Charles 2d. to the present, with the instructions of government for the distribution of the same. This application gave rise to a short epistolary correspondence, with the rev. secretary, which I shall not detail, as the following memorial, presented to the Synod, in 1811, contains its substance.

"The

THE MEMORIAL

OF

WILLIAM STEEL DICKSON D. D.

HUMBLY SHEWETH,

That on, or about, the 16th. of November last, your memorialist, having occasion for some extracts from the records of Synod, wrote to your clerk the rev. Thomas Cuming, requesting " that he would be pleased to have the same made out, by such person as he might choose to employ, and that *your memorialist would pay the expense ;* or, should Mr. Cuming find it inconvenient to have this done, memorialist's son would do it, provided Mr. Cuming would be so good as to entrust him with the originals, which should be faithfully returned."

To this letter, memorialist received a verbal answer, *by his son,* " that Mr. Cuming knew he had some of the papers required, and some he knew he had not; but that he would look over the Synodical papers in his possession, and have as many of those required, as he had, ready for him in a day or two."

On the 29th, of November, memorialist's son called again, and, as he reported to me, Mr. Cuming told him that, " on *reconsidering* the matter, he was of opinion that he could not give *official* copies of any of the Synod's records, without

without permission of that body, as he was but their servant, *particularly* towards *a publication which, he understood,* your memorialist had in contemplation."

Memorialist, unwilling to charge Mr. Cuming with, what appeared to him, an inconsistency, on mere verbal authority, wrote to him, a second time, stating " said inconsistency, and repeated his request that he might be indulged with the extracts &c. &c. as before mentioned."

This request Mr. Cuming refused, *in writing*, nearly for the same reasons as those specified above, with a denial that " he had *either said*, or *intended to say*, that memorialist should be favoured with copies of the papers required."

In fine, the papers have hitherto been withholden from memorialist, to his great disappointment, and probable loss. Memorialist, therefore, entreats and hopes that this rev. Synod will consider and declare, whether Mr. Cuming has acted with propriety in withholding the extracts required; as also, that they will be pleased to order such extracts to be furnished, or permitted to be made, for his use, he paying for the same, as originally proposed."

This memorial being read, the refusal, of the papers required, was defended on the ground

ground taken by Mr. Cuming: " that, as a servant of the Synod, he could not give *official* copies of any of the Synod's records, without permission of that body, particularly towards a publication which he understood to be in contemplation." This circumstance was particularly dwelt on, by the rev. James Horner, second pastor of the Scots church in Mary's Abbey, Dublin—a church so far as I know, never so much as *dreamed* of, except by its self-supposed pastors. He not only defended but warmly praised, the propriety of Mr. Cuming's refusal of papers to a man who was publishing a book, " for the purpose of reflecting on the government of the country, and exposing that body." And, whoever has heard his impressive eloquence, sounded his depth as a " dungeon of sense, learning, and loyalty, or read his *uncommon* displays of knowledge, as a philologist and orthographer, will not be surprised by learning that Mr. Cuming's conduct was approved of. It was approved of in words, equally warm and strong, by the following resolution: " Resolved, that Mr. Cuming our clerk, acted with propriety, *and strictly conformable to the nature of his office*, in refusing official copies of the papers required." Perhaps, however, some may be surprised at what follows, in the very next lines: " Resolved, that copies of the following minutes of Synod be given to Dr. Dickson, by our clerk." The minutes specified were

given accordingly; but the other papers applied for, in my letters to Mr. Cuming were withholden, for reasons unexplained.

That the issue of this business, on a very short recollection, was not only regretted by the body, but its consequences dreaded, was fully proved, in the evening of the same day. A meeting of the committee of overtures was requested and granted. The committee met; an overture, asserting the *right* of every member of Synod to have extracts from its minutes, was proposed, agreed to, signed by the moderator, and left with him, to be brought forward, in open Synod on the following morning. It was brought forward; and almost without discussion, produced the following declaration: "It is the *declared sentiment* of this Synod, that *every member* of it has a *right to have extracts from its minutes, upon paying to the clerk a reasonable compensation for his trouble in giving the same.*"

Here we see, not a *creation*, but a *declaration*, of right. If it then existed as a right, it must have existed from the commencement of Synodical records; and, consequently, Mr. Cuming, instead of "*acting with propriety*, and strictly conformable to the nature of his office," as the Synod have resolved, must have "acted with *impropriety* by *violating a right*, and directly *contrary* to the *nature* of his *office, and all such offices,*

offices, in refusing the extracts and copies for which I applied. As to the condition of "reasonable compensation for additional trouble," I believe it has been considered as justly due to every clerk in office; and, under this impression, in my application, so far as my written word would go, I assured Mr. Cuming of such compensation, be it what it might.

This fact, respecting the Synod's "resolution" and "declaration," I have stated from their own records. Were I to make any remarks, perhaps, they might be such as to expose me to the charge of partiality, if not of treason. In reality, the plea, arising from it, is not of "Dickson *v.* Synod," or "Dickson *v.* Cuming," but "Synod *v.* Synod." To them, therefore, I leave the decision; or, let them nominate their own advocates, jurors, and judges, and I will chearfully abide by their sentence, on the merits of the "resolution and declaration" already quoted.

One observation only I shall subjoin, on this subject. Mr. Cuming denied that "he either said, or intended to say, that I should be favored with copies of the papers required," as my son had reported to me. On this denial being persevered in, at Cookstown, my son was, with difficulty, prevented from rising to vindicate his report, in Synod, by representing the confu-

sion and other disagreeable circumstances, to which it might give rise. But, though he conceded this point, conceiving that a regard to his character required him to support his veracity, he went immediately to Mr. Caulfield, a magistrate in town, and made affidavit of the truth of his report to me; a copy of which he had taken, immediately after his leaving Mr. Cuming. This affidavit is in the very words of my memorial to the Synod. Of this disagreement, between my son's report, verified on oath, and Mr. Cuming's denial, I shall say nothing. I hope, however, I will be excused for asking a few plain questions. " If Mr. Cuming did not mean to favor me with such of the papers required, *as he had*," why did he mention that, " some of them he knew he had, and some he knew he had not; but that he would look over the Synodical papers in his possession, &c. &c. If allowing me such as he had, was not expressed, or implied, in his words to my son, why was a future day mentioned for a second call, respecting them? Without supposing such intention at first, and a change of mind afterwards, what can be the meaning of Mr. Cuming's words, " on considering the matter, he was of opinion that, as a servant, he could not give official copies &c. without permission of the body? Lastly, can any previous instance be produced, of any clerk of Presbytery or Synod, refusing extracts

extracts of the minutes in his keeping to any member of either, who demanded them, on paying for the trouble of making them out."

The solution of these questions I leave, as I have left many others, to those who may have patience to read this long, and, to me, *truly painful* narrative. Contrary to my expectation, the Synodical transactions of last year have obliged me to extend it beyond my original intention. But, the importance of these, and their connexion with the mass of grievances, of which I have presumed to complain, appear to me so evident, that I hope to be forgiven. Perhaps, it may be thought a trivial fault, among the many and great offences, with which I may be charged. Be that as it may, I trust I have fully justified my original profession, of "authenticating every circumstance of importance, respecting the rev. the Synod of Ulster, by extracts from its own records." The opinion of the public I shall not attempt to bias. And I hope, I shall be believed, when I most solemnly declare that the real honor and interest of the Presbyterian body are objects near and dear to my heart as life itself; that of their religious rights and liberties no man is more zealous; and that it shall be the study and endeavour of my remaining life to promote the extension of the invaluable blessings to all our brethren, without difference, and without exception.

I shall

I shall now take the liberty, briefly to recite, the inconveniences, losses, privations, and pains, to which I and my family, were severally exposed, during my long confinement and exile, and what, on the part of a dominant faction in the Synod of Ulster, I and many others, have presumed to call a protracted *political* persecution, by inquisitors, accusers, judges, and executioners, purely *ecclesiastical*, ever since. What must have been our feelings,—what our various mental distresses—in the variety and long succession of these, may be conceived, but cannot be described. However, a man of common sensibility, in the relation of a husband, and father of a family dependent on his exertions for every thing valuable, by making the case his own, may form a tolerably correct judgment of them.

By my arrest, I was not only removed from the care of my own family's education, but deprived of, at least £100 per annum arising from the education of young gentlemen, some boarders, and some day-scholars---with which I was entrusted. From June 1799 the royal bounty, varying from £30 to £32 per annum was withholden from me and my family, in consequence of a question proposed to the Synod, by the rev. Dr. Black. And, by the dissolution of my connexion with the congregation of Portaferry, I was finally deprived of that bounty, and a stipend

pend of £100 per annum. To these, I may safely add £700, for my own and family's expences, during my confinement of *three years and seven months*. Of these different incomes, there can be little doubt of my continuance in the receipt, and also of an additional £70 per annum from Spring 1803, had I been left at liberty, or even *restored to liberty*, previous to November 1799. Counting nothing on these expenses, as greater might have been incurred, had I been at liberty, I mention them only, from the situation to which they reduced my family, while I was cut off from the possibility of providing for them. My account therefore, with prison and persecution, may stand them:

	Dr.
To 13¾ *years privation of academy at* £100 *per ann. ending Feb.* 1*st.* 1812,	£1375 0 0
To 3 *years privation of R. D. commencing, Nov.* 1799 *at* £31 *per ann.*	93 0 0
To 9¼ *years do. ending Spring* 1802 *at* £100 *per ann.*	925 0 0
To 12¼ *years stipend at* £100 *per ann. commencing, Nov.* 1799, *and ending, Feb.* 1802,	1225 0 0
Cr.	£3618 0 0
By compensation,	0000 0 0

I would not, however, have it thought that I have been totally without resources for myself and family during the whole of these thirteen years and nine months, at an advanced period of a life of which I am not ashamed. No! thank

thank God, his providence supplied means, not only of support, but of humble competence, and, in addition to these, *notwithstanding the zealous efforts of the rev. Dr. Black*, and of his lady's brother-in-law, the rev. Thomas Cuming to prevent the settlement of a *rebel adjutant general* as a member of Synod, I have earned £450, in the *abandoned* and *reprobated* congregation of Keady, *during the last nine years. Of* these things I do not boast, but *for* them I am truly thankful. Hitherto they have been sufficient to support me and my family in decency and comfort, and, I trust, they will continue to be so.

I feel myself bound to declare, before I conclude, that I do not blame government for my *arrest*. The confusion of the times may palliate, but not justify it. But I blame them for the prolongation of my confinement, without *trial*, or even *official* charge of crime. I do not blame government directly for the privations and pains, which I endured, during my confinement in Ireland, both by land and sea, as no official document was ever produced to shew that they knew any thing about them; but I blame them for committing the liberties and lives of fellow subjects, as respectable in character, and, at least, as useful to the state, as most of them could pretend to be, to the disposal of wretches, equally strangers to the principles of government, the rights of men, and the feelings of humanity.

humanity. And in the prolongation of my confinement, I do not blame them for my *exportation.* Nay, I most cordially thank them, as, thereby, they not only rescued me from the ignorance and insolence, which I severely felt, but placed me under the protection of a man, whose conduct stripped imprisonment and exile, of half their horrors.

But should it be asked, " why my imprisonment and exile were prolonged, after Hughes had been given up ; M'Ginn, *by compact,* exempted from appearance to prosecute ; and no other information even hinted at ?" This question I can answer, only as an Irishman, by asking another: " is it not possible that the assertions and actions of Synod, in respect to me, might have had some influence in this case ? Could the Synod believe that the solemn declaration of their political purity, *as a body* and the reality of their *shame, sorrow,* and *indignation,* excited by the delinquency of a few *deluded* and *unworthy* brethren, could be credited, either by the king or his government ; and, at the same time, their unqualified charge against me, of being " implicated in treasonable and seditious practices," supported, as it was, by a suspension of his majesty's bounties &c. &c. should obtain NO credit. The charge was awful. If the charge was proved, the " wages of the sin was death." The Synod's declaration of

their own *loyalty*, and their brother's *guilt*, was, in fact, one declaration. On the same authority the belief, or disbelief, of both must depend. Can we then suppose that the Synod of Ulster, ministers of the gospel of love and peace, and preachers of justice, mercy, and truth, would publish a charge, which, if proved, consigned a brother to the *lamp-iron*, and his head to a *spike*, without *knowledge* of its *truth*, or evidence complete, unequivocal, and irrefragable in their power to support it? Certainly not! government must have seen and felt this; and, depending on their veracity paid a *partial* respect to their *gratuitous* charge; by prolonging my confinement; though unwilling to depart from that delicacy, extended to Messrs. Newell, Bird, and M'Ginn, they did not call on Messrs. Black, Cuming and co. to support their information on oath, lest they should incur the *unmerited* obloquy of bringing a brother to the *rope* and the *hatchet*. This I shall not assert to have been the fact; but, I am sure, suspicions, *less founded*, have frequently been entertained; and, for any thing which has yet appeared, that of my having been a *rebel general* may be classed in the number. Be that as it may, let it be remembered, that I have neither acknowledged, nor denied the charge; and, I am fully convinced that there is not a man on earth capable of proving, either its truth, or its falsehood, by any evidence entitled to credit in any court on earth. If such a man

a man exists, I hope he will feel himself called upon, by a sense of justice to the government of 1798, to the rev. Dr. Black and co. and to me, to come forward and ascertain the fact.

In the preceding narrative I have endeavoured fairly to present to public view the proposed object. That I have faithfully copied the documents on which it rests for credit need not be doubted, as I have all the originals ready for inspection. If, in any instance I have verified the prediction of the sagacious and learned SEER, of the Scots church, Mary's Abbey, Dublin, by "*reflecting* on the government of the country, or *exposing* the rev. the Synod of Ulster," *unjustly*, I am sorry for it, as it never was my intention. However, I have reflected on the government for committing me, and my fellow-prisoners, to *wretches* over whom they exercised no control, *that we ever learned*, by warrant, or written instructions of any kind; nor ever called to account for their treatment of us—wretches, to whom, or *most* of whom, we considered ourselves vastly superior in rank, in character, in every thing truly respectable—perhaps, even in LOYALTY, properly so called. As to the rev. the general Synod of Ulster, if I have *exposed them*, it is only by giving their own minutes a wider range, and more general reading, than otherwise they would have had. If they, therefore, expose them to shame or re-

proach, the blame must lie at their door, not at mine. As to the Synod of Ulster, though their minutes have obliged me to mention them, as a body, I never meant to charge them with any other *error* than that of TIMID and *unguarded* compliance with the dictation of a *predominant few,* under the *terror of the times.* Of this compliance, I have many reasons to believe, many are now ashamed, and for it, some *heartily sorry.* The next meeting of that rev. body shall determine the fact. Till, that meeting, let opinion be suspended, and language restrained. The body will then speak out, remove all uncertainty, and enable every tongue to speak truth concerning them.

I now leave the preceding narrative to the judgment of the public; and my character to its mercy. Justice I am sure of; and to the decree of justice I shall bow with respect, and chearfully submit to all its consequences.

OCCURRENCES

IN AND FROM

ARMAGH

on the 9th. of September, 1811.

HOWEVER simple the subject of the following pages originally was, yet, by an interference, for which I shall leave my readers to account, it has become so complicated as to require a detail of some length, that it may be seen in all its bearings. With this detail I shall not swell, or rather load, the present volume. It will be a little volume, in itself, and is nearly ready for the press. A few circumstances, however, I deem it necessary to mention here, in order to vindicate a character which I have uniformly endeavoured to preserve pure. The recital of these to many may seem tedious, but, I hope, more will bear with it, as necessary, when they consider the charge made against me of forging a slander sufficient to consign my name to infamy, in order to screen, at least, an indiscretion of which, if guilty, I should ever be ashamed.

This charge was " that I was *beastly* drunk, fell from my horse, and, in order to account for the bruises I had received, forged the story that I had been waylaid, and beaten by *orangemen.*

This

This charge was never maid, or even hinted at, so far as I have ever heard, before the appearance of the evening Herald of September 16th. Irritated by the circumstances, published in that paper as doubting the fact, of my having been waylaid, assaulted, and grossly abused, on my way from Armagh on the 9th.—a fact, which I have uniformly asserted, and most solemnly do assert; but that it was perpetrated by orangemen, I never asserted, whatever I might suspect, as the persons were to me totally unknown. For the very same reason, I could not contradict the paragraph in the Herald, by publicly acquitting orangemen of the charge. However, my refusal to do this, gave rise to great offence, offence to clamor, clamor to consultations, and consultations to the resolution of refuting my *calumnies*, and retorting my *vileness*, with a vengeance, worse than exile to "Connaught," and, to a mind in which a sense of Truth, virtue, and honor had not become callous, equal to "Hell."

On what grounds this charge was made I cannot conceive, as the *shadow* of evidence has not yet been brought, though the *body* has been hunted for, with an ardor more than common, in order to support it. To account for this failure, I feel it necessary to detail the circumstances of

of the 9th. September with a minuteness, which, in other circumstances, would be truly ridiculous.

About noon, on that day, I dismounted at the chief inn, in Armagh. Immediately, four or five gentlemen came forward, only one of whom I had ever seen before. Being introduced by him to the others, they expressed pleasure at seeing me in town, and requested that I would allow them to conduct me to their committee, then sitting. This I declined, as indelicate, they being probably engaged in particular business. One of the gentlemen, Mr. Patrick Callaghan, whom I had never knowingly seen before, then said: "I hope we shall have the pleasure of seeing you at our meeting, and of your company at dinner." I told him, my intention was to attend the meeting, and that I would accept his invitation with pleasure. I then asked their hour of meeting. One of the gentlemen answered "that he did not know, but that he would call on me, before they met. at any place which I would name. I mentioned the house of a lady, to which I repaired immediately; but had scarcely taken a seat, when two of the gentlemen, whom I had left, entered with a message from the committee requesting me to call on them, I went immediately, and continued with them till they set out for the chapel, whither I accompanied them, and where

I staid

I staid till the meeting was over. From the chapel I proceeded *directly*, with some other gentlemen, to Mr. Callaghan's, where dinner was served almost immediately. It was then after *three* o'clock; and about *five*, or a few minutes after it, two of the gentlemen being obliged to set off for Newry, we parted. I went directly to call on Mr. Davidson, then a valetudinarian, with whom I staid about *twenty* minutes, or, at most, *half an hour*. From him I went to Mr. Samuel Dickson's, with whom I found three gentlemen, Mr. Alexander M'Kinstry, a most intimate friend; Lee M'Kinstry Esq. a slight acquaintance; and Richard M'Connel Esq. to me an entire stranger. After spending about an hour and half with them, the approach of evening induced me to take my leave; and my friend, Mr. M'Kinstry was so polite as to accompany me to the inn. The distance may be about 300 yards, along the most public street in Armagh. It was clear day-light. The shops were all open, and people in many doors. We passed numbers standing in the street, and met many walking. We entered the inn-yard together. On calling for my mare, the hostler told me that he had forgotten to bring my saddle, which I had ordered him, in the morning, to get repaired; but that, if I would step into the house, for a few minutes, he would have it for me. Instead of this I ordered him to take my mare to the sadlers, as

it

it was not out of my way, and I would mount there. He did so. Mr. M'Kinstry and I walked thither, and stood at the door, till the saddle was brought out. The sadler, his workmen, and some others were in the shop, more about the door, and a considerable number in the street. In presence of all these I mounted, and rode off nearly 200 yards, along a public street, with all doors open, and many people walking backward and forward, which brought me opposite Mr. Callaghan's, where I had dined. He, being informed that I had ridden past, came after me, begged me to stop for an hour, as it was so early in the evening, and some gentlemen were then with him, in hope of my calling, according to promise. On my refusal, and pleading my state of health, he begged that I would stop one minute, as one of the gentlemen, gone to Newry, had left a note for me, with an injunction to send it to me, as early as possible next morning, if I did not call on that evening. There was a crowd of people in his shop, and before his door, seemingly loading or unloading cars. On his return with the note, he told me that its object was to press a compliance with the request so earnestly made to me at and after dinner. On answering, that I could not promise, and putting the note carelessly into my out side pocket, I rode on. He however, unsatisfied and anxious, walked on with me, at least a quarter of a mile, pressing and praying my compliance with the

request alluded to. Our parting may have been about eight o'clock; perhaps a quarter of an hour sooner or later. As I had no watch, I cannot pretend to be correct as to minutes.

Here I shall pause.—Here I entreat my readers to pause also, and to review the frivolous detail which I have been compelled to give of the trifling occurrences of the eight hours which I passed in Armagh, on the 9th. of September —occurrences so trifling, that even the lewdness of *prostitute loyalty* would not have tempted me to mention them, had they been uncombined with malignant folly, and vileness more than vile. This combination rendered the notice of them, in my opinion, absolutely necessary; and I feel happy in the fact that I am able to fill up every part of that eight hours, in a manner truly uncommon, by shewing that I did not pass, *nor could pass*, five minutes of that time in any other house, or any other company, than those which I have specified; and, consequently, that they, or some of them, could bear testimony to every word, act, or *appearance* of mine, while in Armagh, on that day. The gentlemen, whom I have mentioned, are well known, and of acknowledged respectability, and, whenever my character shall prove unequal to support itself, I shall call upon them to *bolster* it: but, till then, I shall never insult them, or myself, by such call. Those, who choose, I wish to do so, as they will certainly tell the truth.

Thus

Thus far evidence is attainable,—was attainable from the beginning,——*but never looked for*. As to what passed, from my parting with Mr. Callaghan until my arrival at my own house, no *evidence* can be, or has pretended to be, adduced. No person has presumed to say that he saw me falling or fallen from my horse, lying in a ditch. or staggering along the king's highway, during that night, or the succeeding morning. Hence the account of that short period must depend on my own credit, whatever that credit may be.

On leaving Mr. Callaghan I rode at a walk only. Near the separation of two public roads I passed a few men, about a mile from Armagh, About a quarter of a mile farther, I felt a necessity to dismount. Uncertain, whether the people, whom I had passed, might take what is called the *lower* road, or that on which I was, I turned into a by-road opposite to the corner of what is called " Oats's Orchard." While there, feeling the evening become cold, I took a large neckcloth from my pocket, and wrapped it round my neck, before I remounted. This done, I rode on, at my usual rate, for about a mile and half, when, feeling occasion for a pocket handkerchief, on putting my hand into my pocket, I found none there, I searched my other pocket, but in vain. The thought immediately occurred that I must have pulled it out with the large neckcloth, before mentioned, and probably the

note with it, which I had put into the same pocket. On search, I found that both were gone. This determined me to ride back, as I did not like that the note, which I had not read, should fall into unknown hands. I did so, and found both, as I had suspected. Having mounted again I proceeded homewards unmolested, till I came to the bottom of a little hill, at an angle of the road, near the house of a Mr. Simpson, distinguished by the appellation of "squire." On turning the corner, I perceived three men coming out of a by-road, nearly opposite to his avenue. One of them fell behind, and the other two went on, one on each side of the car track, along which I rode. A few perches brought me up with them, when the one on my right side seizing my bridle, cried; "Now." In an instant, the other seizing my left arm, brought me to the ground. On my attempting to get up from my knees, I received a blow on the back of my neck, which laid me flat, and completely stunned me. As it was directly across the upper joint, it might have rendered a second unnecessary, had it not been for the large neckcloth, which I had fortunately put around my neck. After this, the first thing of which I was sensible was a severe blow between my loins, about four inches from the lower extremity of the back bone. This was repeated three or four times, not as in the hurry of passion, but deliberately, during

during which time the two men spoke to each other repeatedly, but did not address a word directly to me. The only additional blow which I received was across my right arm, immediately above the elbow, which rendered it nearly useless for a considerable time, and the effects of which, I have reason to fear, will be lasting as life. I do not know that the third man took any active part in this scene; or that he who seized my bridle, went beyond encouraging his friend. The last words which I heard, seemed to be uttered by a voice some yards distant; "Come away, boys.—D——n his soul! you have given him plenty."

From the time of my leaving Armagh, (say eight o'clock) and the circumstances mentioned, this scene may have commenced about half-after *nine*, or, perhaps, near *ten* o'clock. How long it continued I cannot presume to say, as the first blow rendered me nearly insensible for some time. After I was left alone I endeavoured to get up, but found it impossible to accomplish it. As the road was dry and the gripe free from water, I crawled forward, on my hands and knees, till I reached a place so shallow as to admit my approach to the hedge, by the help of which I got on my feet with great difficulty and equal pain. With no less difficulty and pain did I make my way out of the gripe, though not more than six or eight inches deep, with a slope as easy as can be conceived.

ceived. Having got on the road, and wishing, if possible, to conceal this vile business, I resolved to attempt getting home without alarming any human being, and concealing the matter for ever. In this wish I was disappointed by the increase of my pain on Tuesday night, which induced Mrs. Dickson to send to Armagh for Dr Simpson, on Wednesday morning. He came, and brought with him Surgeon Vigan. They examined my neck and back, both by *sight* and *touch;* and, by Dr. Simpson's order, Mr. Vigan took blood from my arm; and on his return sent me medicines, a pitch plaister, &c. &c. I told them the abuse I had received, so far as seemed necessary to enable the doctor, from the knowledge of the cause of my sufferings, to remove or alleviate my pain. What opinion the doctor formed or entertains of that *cause*, from pure delicacy to him I have never inquired.

From that day, the report of my situation, and the cause, was speedily spread abroad. Many friends called daily, and many inquiries were made. To all, without hesitation, I told the time, place, and manner in which I had been attacked; but without any detail of the circumstances which took place, from the time I left Armagh till that of my being assaulted. With respect to the assailants, I uniformly declared, as I now most solemnly do, "that they were to me totally unknown." This did not satisfy

satisfy some inquisitive minds, who, from the unhappy prevalence of party in the country, seemed anxious to know, of what party I *believed*, or *supposed*, them to be. All such inquiries I checked by observing that *knowledge alone* could justify a charge against any party; and asking, "How can I *know*, to what party they belong, when I do not know the person of any one of them?"

For a few days nothing farther occurred, except expressions of sorrow and regret, from some Catholic gentlemen, for the treatment I had received, and liberal offers of subscription *from them* might give the appearance of party to the business, and inflame that spirit which every real friend to his country must wish extinguished for ever.

In the week following, a paragraph appeared in the Dublin Herald announcing my being assaulted, but incorrect in the circumstances, and criminally *rash* in its conclusions. This paragraph, however, was, with equal *rashness* attributed to me, though the incorrectness of circumstance was so glaring, and open to exposure, that nothing short of madness could have tempted me to be guilty of it. However, the charge against *orangemen*, which it contained, irritated the orange spirit. If I may believe report, meetings were holden far and wide, and reprisals on

me

me unanimously agreed on. Reports, I know, deserve little credit, especially among people, enslaved by prejudice, misled by interested partisans, or inflamed by passion. Hence, I treated these with the contempt which, in my mind, they deserved. However, that they were not altogether groundless, a few days convinced me; and that conviction, *even yet*, receives *weekly* strength.

Towards the end of September, I was called on by a friend, who told me " that he had been applied to, informed of the offence which I had given, what was agreed on by different bodies, and that, if I did not *publickly contradict* the charge in the Herald, it would be contradicted from another quarter, and things PROVED *which I would not like.*

A few days afterwards, the same information and threat were communicated to me by two other friends, on the authority of a conversation among several gentlemen in the county of *Monaghan*, one of whom, I presume, would consider a denial of his orangism equivalent to a charge of insanity, sedition, or united-Irishism.

To the warm expostulations and friendly advice, of these, and several others, I gave the same answer—that the contradiction required must mean, " an acknowledgment that I had not been

been assaulted," and a declaration that *orangemen* were not the *assailants*," neither of which I could possibly make: as the former would be an acknowledgment of a *gross* falsehood; and the latter could not be called by a *milder name*, as it was impossible to declare, whether persons, *whom I knew not*, were, or were not, *orangemen*." To the latter I added, " their threat of exposure implies that they have something against me in their power—to that exposure I bid defiance."

During a great part of October, and the first week of November, I heard little of the business, concluded that it was getting to rest, and resolved to sit quietly under the impeachments of my private character, trusting to the knowledge of my past conduct for near half a century, and my future behaviour, for its full and fair vindication. This I thought wiser, and more consistent with my character as a minister of a gospel of patience and peace, than, by querulous self-defence, or angry invective, to revive and inflame jealousies, quarrels, and outrages, which, not without suspicion of connivance by some would-be great people, had long distracted and disgraced the county.

From this pleasing dream—for dream it must have been—I was roused on the eighth of November. On the morning of that day, I was called upon by a T——s J——n Esq. alias

captain J——n; who, as he said, had come out to hunt, but hares were so d—d scarce, he had met with no sport. I pressed him to alight, but he could not. He had just called to know how I was—d—d the scoundrels who had abused me—offered to subscribe five guineas for their detection &c. &c. Feeling cold, confined as I had been to the house, I begged him again to alight. He could not, as there was a gentleman coming up the road, with whom he was to proceed in the chace. On this, he raised himself on his saddle, as if looking for his friend. His friend immediately appeared, not posting after him, but popping out from behind a hedge, not forty yards distant. On his coming up Mr. J——n introduced him to me, informing me, at the same time, that he was a magistrate of the county. This was very necessary, as I had never heard of Mr. Langley's name or magistracy before. Mr. Langley was so good as to express sorrow for the treatment I had received, repeated Mr. J——n's information, that he was a magistrate, kindly offered to take my examinations, or even write any examinations which I would dictate, and proposed to subscribe liberally for the discovery of my assailants. All this I declined for a variety of reasons which I detailed to him with a fullness and candor which, I thought, might have satisfied any reasonable man. Such was not the case. He changed his countenance, and *affecting* the dignity of the magistrate, told me

me that a publication in a blackguard newspaper (attributed to me) conveyed a reflection on the county, and a gross libel on its magistrates, and that *they* were determined to support *their* honor. To this something like a threat was added, if I would not lodge examinations.

Unaccustomed to threats, and disgusted with Mr. Langley's manner, I told him that I would not trouble *him* with any examinations; but that I would publish the whole business, and afterwards, if necessary, verify on oath every word I would write. On this the gentlemen rode off, seemingly dissatisfied; and having failed in running down the real object of their chace, set out in quest of fresh game.

That I was really the object of this day's chace I was fully convinced, in the evening, by certain information, that it had been publickly known and talked of in Armagh during the week —that it proceeded from no friendly intention towards me—and that the gentlemen, or one of them, had strictly examined a poor laborer of my next neighbour about the business on which they honored me with a visit, on their way to my house.

On this information, I instantly determined to write to Mr. J——n, as I knew nothing about Mr. Langley, lest any words of mine, in my

interview with them should be misunderstood, and consequently misrepresented; and in this determination wrote as follows;

'SIR.

I am exceedingly glad that you did me the honor of calling on me to day though your call has imposed on me a painful task. However I may have felt at the time, when I turned over in my mind the latter part of the conversation, with the *pretext under which*, and the *manner in which*, Mr. Langley was induced to favor me with a call—or rather, *by seeming accident*, came in my way—I shall not pretend to say what my feelings were, as I have a peculiar fear on my mind of taking offence rashly, and a much greater of giving it. You will, no doubt, recollect the reasons I gave for suppressing all public notice of what, I ASSERT, took place on the night of the 9th. of September last. For these reasons, I resisted every application of my friends to have the affair published, with offers of reward &c. These reasons would have induced me to have suppressed such publication for ever, *regardless of every reflection on my character*, to which I might be exposed, by the ignorant or prejudiced. This day has convinced me that I was wrong; and, in that conviction, you may rest assured that I will publish every circumstance, in which any person living could have any concern with my conduct or situation, during the day or night of

of the 9th. of September last. I hope this will be more satisfactory than any unmeaning examinations as to one circumstance only. I shall state nothing, it may be taken for granted, but what may be rebutted, if untrue. At any rate, it will give a fair opportunity, to every one, of judging for himself, and acting afterwards, in respect to me, as he may see cause.

I am,

Sir,

your most obedient servant,

"WILLIAM STEEL DICKSON."

Roan,
Nov. 8th. 1811.

On the 9th. while copying the preceding letter, some additional information from my friend induced me to add the following postscript; and also, to avoid all correspondence with Messrs. J——n and Langley, *except in writing*.

" P. S. Since writing the above I have had reason to think that I misapprehended Mr. Langley, who seemed to say that he called on me, in the name, or on behalf, of the magistrates of the county. This induces me to request that you may be so good as to inform me, *in writing*, whether I did or not, that I may know whether I am to address my account of September 9th. to you and him exclusively, to the magisterial body at large, or to the public. Your answer

answer I shall expect impatiently, for my direction in this business, as I shall have the account ready for publication, in a few days."*

On Sunday the 10th. coming from public worship, I perceived the street to be crowded with people looking into the lane which leads to our Meeting-house, and, at the entrance, William Irwin Esq. treasurer of the county, standing with a stranger, whom I did not recognise to be Mr. Langley, as I had never seen him in muffling, or on foot, before, till he reminded me, and told me that his business was, to know whether I had made out an account of the 9th. September &c. I told him that I had not; nor did I suppose that I would for some days: but that I had a letter in my pocket for Mr. Johnson, though intended principally for him; and, as it was unsealed, I would then give it to him, if he chose; which I did. Mr. Irwin, seeming to observe the attention of the crowd in the street, proposed that we should walk into the house adjoining, in which, by the bye, if I am rightly informed, a room had been bespoken for our reception. We did so. After our entrance, Mr. Langley looked over the letter, and put it into his pocket, without comment or remark. Our conversation commenced with expressions of

* When this was written, I had no idea that such a long train of vile *trifles* was to succeed, as would have delayed the promised publication, one week.

of regard by Mr. Langley, sorrow for vile reports, necessity of silencing them, offers of subscribing liberally &c. and a *demand* of examinations. These I declined, and from what I have already written, and the letter of which I have given a copy, it will not be supposed that I assigned any reason for my so doing. On my silence, the Evening Herald was again introduced, as on Friday, loaded with opprobrious epithets, and charged with a most atrocious libel against the county of Armagh and its magistrates. By and bye, it came out, that this atrocious libel was "the advertisement of my narrative, with the resolutions &c. &c. subjoined." These I mention together, as he read the whole, with an emphasis, fully as *strong* as well placed. The words and phrases, "intolerance, religious liberty, happy and united, indisputable rights," and some others, struck my ear with peculiar force: and when he came to the words, "we shall take &c. &c. at *one guinea each*," he paused and turning to me, obligingly said, "I wish, doctor, you may make £50,000 by your book." This emitted, holding one paper in his hand, he pulled out a bundle from his pocket, the size of which would not have disgraced the bag of a *petty* attorney, exclaiming: "this is not the only paper—there are a few that I have picked up, in which the scandalous libel has been repeated again and again. I should not have minded it, had I not met it at *Cheltenham*, copied into

into an *English* paper &c. &c." Then, after a warm eulogium on the magistracy (whose virtues I had never impeached) supported by A case, in which he, and *his friend Jemmy Dawson*, as he was pleased to stile him, convicted AN orangeman, he reverted to the Herald, and its correspondents in terms equally scurrilous, some of which seemed levelled at me. I felt hurt, turned to Mr. Irwin, and said. " the advertisement is mine—I had it published in both the Belfast papers, *for several months*, before it appeared in the Herald—of what follows I know no more than you do ; nor have I any thing to say, only that I feel highly gratified by a patronage so honorable, and shall endeavour to deserve it, as long as I live."

'Here Mr. Langley interfered, in a tone and manner, of which, from my confined knowledge of *gentlemen*, I could not conceive a *gentleman* capable." Are not you, sir, the author of the original libel ? If you did not communicate it, how could it have been published by these incendiaries, as no witness was present." Addressing myself again to Mr. Irwin, I gave him the same account which I have already written. Being somewhat irritated, with what I deemed *vulgar insolence*, I arose to leave the room, Mr. Irwin, with his usual good nature, begged I might not go away. I did not. Mr. Langley, in tone much softened, assured me that he had no intention of

giving

giving offence, repeated his expressions of respect, and offered once more to take my examinations, and even write them for me. For this condescension I expressed my gratitude, adding that "I could write for myself."

On this, he seemed superlatively good, and kindly told me that, "if I would write examinations, he would call on the day following, or any other day that I would mention." I begged that he might not give himself any such trouble. The whole matter I would publish, as I had promised, I would publish—he might then act as he chose. He then asked, "shall I say that you refused to swear to any examinations?" "No, sir," said I, "I never said or intended to say, any such thing. I shall swear to what I have asserted, but, *from circumstances*, I shall choose my own time.

I arose again to depart, and as I was walking to the door, Mr. Langley muttered something about the character of the magistrates of the county, and the necessity of supporting *their* dignity; adding that he would summon the neighbourhood, and, as I thought, me also, to appear before them. Having heard his words indistinctly, I turned and asked him if he meant to summon me. No, said he, but I will summon the people in the neighbourhood, and send you a copy of the summons. I will be

 much

much obliged to you, replied I, as it is likely I shall attend you on the occasion: and so walked off.

Having received no answer from Mr. J——n to the simple question in my letter by Mr. Langley, for three days, on Thursday morning I wrote him the following note, and sent it by our by post.

" SIR,

I beg you may be so good as let me have an answer, per bearer, to the question contained in the postscript of my letter to you by Mr. Langley. I'd be glad to know likewise when Mr. Langley will commence his *solemn inquest* in this neighbourhood, which, I hope will be very *strict* and very *extensive*. I am sorry that your examinations of poor men in your way hither, on Friday, turned out so unsatisfactory.

I am,
Sir,
your much obliged

ROAN. WILLIAM STEEL DICKSON.

November 14*th*. 1811.

T——S J——N ESQ.

ARMAGH."

On the evening of the 17th. I received, through the Armagh post-office, the following note; but as will appear, without even an allusion to my question.

" SIR,

" SIR,

Armagh 14th. November, 1811.

I am a loyal man and wish well to the constitution in general, therefore you must excuse any interference on my part in your concerns, particularly as not belonging to this county, I do not feel myself called upon in this business—there are some insinuations in your letter which I do not understand, but that perhaps may be occasioned by my not being as expert at the pen as yourself.

I am,

Sir,

your most obedient humble servant,

T——S J——N.

P. S. The suspicions levelled at me in your letters has prevented that friendly interference which I at first intended you.

T. J."

On the same 17th. I was favored with the following note from Mr. Langley:

" Mr. Langley informs Mr. Dixon that there will be an examination of witnesses on Monday next 12 o'clock at the session house relative to an assault alleged to have been committed on the 9th. September last on Mr. Dixon.

Mr. Dixon may call it an *inquest* or what he pleases, but Mr. Langley is above noticing the insinuations contained in Mr. Dixon's letters to Mr. J——n farther than by saying *they are unfounded in fact.*

Armagh Saturday morning."

Mr. J——n's note I shall leave to be criticised by my readers, on comparing it with my letters. With respect to that of Mr. Langley, I shall only say, that I cannot conceive what the insinuations are which he considered himself *above noticing*, yet *provokingly* pronounces *unfounded in fact*. Does Mr. Langley mean to assert that my letters contain *lies*, or even a *single lie*? His answer to this will ascertain the *notice* to which his note may be entitled.

About noon on the 8th. I arrived in Armagh, where I learned that a number of witnesses from the country, and several in town, had been summoned. On reaching the session house I found a multitude of people assembled without and within. Before one o'clock, it was so crowded that I could scarcely get a seat, but no magistrate appeared. The people became impatient, and several gentlemen told me that my longer stay would be vain as, they were confident, no examination would take place. I determined to wait the issue, not knowing what construction might be put on my absence. About two o'clock I was called upon and requested to walk into a room where some gentlemen wished to see me. On entering, I found these gentlemen to be four magistrates and the Mr. Irwin already mentioned. After some loose conversation, one of the gentlemen said that they did not mean to have any public examination, as it might be attended with

with confusion and disturbance. Indeed, I believe, a stronger word than either was used. I said, the people expected a public examination, and from reports which had been industriously circulated, I conceived it due to me, and most earnestly wished for it. Mr. Langley *modestly* answered that my own examinations were their object. That cannot be, said I, as I have not been summoned for *any purpose;* but, if ye are afraid to examine publicly, as has been hinted, will ye be so good as to order your witnesses in and examine them privately in my presence? This also being declined, I requested them, to allow me to call in some gentlemen, not summoned, and to examine them. This was refused; and my examinations again mentioned. On this, I gave them a circumstantial account of the time when, the place where, and the number of persons by whom I was assaulted, withholding only the conversation which passed among them during the transaction, and which I have still withholden. After this I was asked by an old gentleman, whose name as I learned afterwards, is "Livingstone;" "do you *believe,* sir, that they were orangemen?" That question, sir, I will not answer. I have told you that they were to me totally unknown. And I now say that, for that reason, I could not *know* whether they were, or were not, orangemen; and that I never said, or sanctioned the saying of any other man, in word or writing, either that they were, or were not.

not. My *belief* is of no consequence; but I will publish the whole business, since such a bustle has been made about it, and with it the transactions of this day, and leave the world to *believe* for itself." " O sir," said he, " we have too many publications." " Perhaps we have, sir, but many or few, this will be only one added to the number." Here Mr. Langley *mildly* asked: " Will you swear to the account you have given?" " I will, *on conditions*. Let your clerk write it out." The clerk wrote it very imperfectly. I corrected what he had written, and had an addition made at my request. While he was doing this, I employed myself in writing short notes of the refusal to examine publicly &c. &c. as I have related. The examinations being read, and by me approved of, I was asked to swear to them. I will, said I, on conditions; the first of which is, that I may call in three or four gentlemen to be present at a recital of what has passed here to day. Here Mr. Langley belched out, with his usual delicacy. " What sort of gentlemen?" " Gentlemen as respectable as any in this room, was the answer. This being refused, I requested *one* to be admitted. This also being refused, I read to them, the notes I had written, told them that, as I intended to publish, my object was that they should be signed by the gentlemen present, or one of them, and remain in the hands of their clerk, as a test of such publication. " No! they had no terms

terms to make.—They would sign no paper. I then proposed to leave the paper with said clerk, on his signature in their presence. This would not be admitted. In order then to remove every difficulty, as I thought, I proposed to leave it with him, on his promise to keep it safe and produce it when called for: in which case I would swear to the affidavit then on the table; during which words I held out the paper to the clerk. He was authoritatively forbidden to receive it: and I called upon to declare whether or no I refused to swear to the affidavit. No, said I, allow the paper to be received, and I will swear to it immediately. They would not. Then, said I no security against misrepresentation—no affidavit—and so walked off.

That my suspicions of misrepresentation were not unfounded appeared in a few minutes after I left the session house. I had not taken a seat at the inn, to which a few gentlemen accompanied me, till a friend ran in with the information that my *friend* captain J——n was haranging a multitude in the street, and assuring them, on the authority of one of the magistrates, (James Johnson Esq.) that I had peremptorily refused to swear to *any affidavit*, or *any thing whatever*. On the hint of a second friend I took two gentlemen with me, called on James Johnson Esq. and before several witnesses, asked him whether he had said, what the other gentleman had repeated,

peated, as on his authority. His answer was neither hasty, nor direct. After some hesitation, he said: "you know, sir—you know, you would not swear to the affidavit, after you got it corrected and enlarged, but *on conditions.*" "What were these conditions, sir? When you abandoned what you proposed, in your summons, and refused every thing I asked, did I not offer to swear to the affidavit, would you allow your clerk to receive and retain a paper securing me, against misrepresentations, in a publication of which I gave you notice? "Yes! but we could not receive any such paper?" "Did you mention this condition to your friend, when you mentioned my refusal to swear &c." "I dont know—but——I mentioned conditions, which WE could not admit." "Incorrectness, sir, may be the cause of much misunderstanding, of which no man can calculate the consequences. I must, therefore, say that, when you mention my refusal &c. &c. you may specify the reasons of that refusal, else I must consider any misrepresentation which may take place as owing to your incorrectness." Some more *good-humoured talk* took place. What it was, I shall leave Mr. Johnson, surgeon Maziere, in whose shop it took place, and Messrs George Wilson and George Kidd, who accompanied me, to relate, should they ever deem it proper, or find it necessary.

That

That misrepresentations continued, with respect to what passed between the worshipful magistrates and me, on the 18th.—Nay, that they were circulated industriously, and swallowed with avidity, I was *fully* convinced on the 20th. and severely condemned *for holding any private communication with them.*

Thus placed between misrepresentation on the one side; and, I own, *merited* censure on the other; I concluded, that, in order to check, or to counteract, such misrepresentations, some means might be necessary; and that the most proper might be the testimony of the only persons present, during the *divanical* transactions of the 18th.—Hence, on the 21st. I wrote to the clerk of magistracy the following note:

"SIR,

If consistent with your duty, I beg you may send me a *correct* copy of the affidavit of Monday last, as *amended* and *enlarged* by me. And, as it is probable I shall be obliged to call for your testimony as to what passed in your presence, in the session-house, on that day, *the privilege of any other witness being refused me*, I think it proper to apprise you of this probability, that you may recollect as minutely, as possible the variety of circumstances, and the order in

which they occurred. You shall be paid for your trouble by,

Sir,

Your very humble servant,

WILLIAM STEEL DICKSON.

Roan,

Nov. 21st. 1811.

The bearer will call for an answer."

On the evening of the same day, I had an answer from the clerk, informing me that " Mr. LANGLEY took the affidavit with him; and that, if returned, I should have the copy required, &c."

☞ Such copy I have never received.

As William Irwin, Esq. was present at the conversation between Mr. Langley and me on the 10th. and that of the 18th. with the magistrates, *though every other gentleman*, not A MAGISTRATE, was refused admittance, I wrote him, on the 22d. as follows:

" DR. SIR,

Among the many painful circumstances attending some late transactions, none is more so than the necessity under which I am of giving trouble to my friends and neighbours. That you, whom I have ever respected, and whom, I am sure, I shall ever have cause to respect, should be among the number, I most feelingly regret. Had the public examination, on Monday

day last, been proceeded in, as I most ardently wished; or, had I been permitted to have *even one* witness present at my conversation with the magistrates on that day, this might have been avoided. However, as the matter now stands, I feel it unavoidable, and that your testimony, not only as to the proceedings of that day, but what passed between Mr. Langley and me, in Keady, on Sunday the 10th. instant, will be necessary. I, therefore, take the liberty of requesting that you may take the trouble of recollecting, not only the circumstances of which you were witness on both occasions, but the order in which they occurred.

Be assured, sir, I make this request with the utmost reluctance. But, all circumstances considered, I trust to your own feelings for my apology. During a life, not short, I have been so happy, in spite of all persecution, to preserve something *like* character. It cannot, therefore, be thought strange that I should be unwilling to part with it, in the evening of my day. Believe me, with real respect,

Dr. Sir,
your very humble servant,
WILLIAM STEEL DICKSON."

Roan,
Nov. 22d. 1811.

WILLIAM, IRWIN, ESQ.
Violet-Hill."

To this letter I received a verbal answer; either that he would write, or that he would call on me, in a few days. I do not recollect which. However, *he* has not yet done either, nor have I troubled *him* with any farther Application.

When I wrote the two preceding letters, I meant to publish *immediately* an account of the assault of the 9th. of September with its consequents down to the evening of November 18th. and my object was to have the gentlemen, to whom they were addressed, prepared, *by calm recollection*, to confirm or refute it, so far as they were, by their presence, connected with it.

From immediate publication I was dissuaded, by reasons, the solidity of which I have experienced. Report, with her trumpet higher toned than ever, sounded, not only *calumnies*, but *boasts*, and *threats*, far and wide. This induced me to have a letter, dated, November 28th. 1811, published, in the Belfast Chronicle, referring to a numerous acquaintance, of all ranks, for nearly fifty years, for my character—requesting that, if called for, it might be fairly given—and that the public opinion, as to the reports circulated, might be suspended till my account &c. should be published.

This letter, preceded by an *anonymous* publication, appeared in the Dublin "Patriot" through which

which I had been threatened with exposure for more than two months: and, a few days afterwards, followed by an *anonymous* letter, with which all who read the Herald must be acquainted. Of these letters I shall, at present, take no notice, only by saying, that they have strong marks of the same family, though differently dressed; and that all such, when they tend to affect character, comfort, or interest, are universally and justly considered as the base and *cowardly* attacks of the vilest of all ASSASSINS. Let the assassin, or assassins, come forward, and avow them, and they shall meet with all *due* respect.

From respect to myself I passed them with silent contempt, as I am determined to do every attack of the kind.

If I can depend on friends, whose veracity I never had cause to doubt, this my silence inspired confidence, inflated presumption, and set the tongue of folly loose. "His silence has done for him—he dare not pretend to answer what has been published—the manner, in which he has been *taken short*, has quieted him—you'll hear no more of his account of assaults—and, if his *narrative* appears before his death, government will take care of him---Mr. Bushe knows the whole

whole---no matter---this will serve some body---government will know their friends---&c. &c. &c."

All this did not tempt me to break silence, as the names of individuals were not directly mentioned.—All I could get on this *delicate* subject, in answer to my *indelicate* questions, was, " I do not wish to have *my* name brought into question—you may guess as you can; but you have vile enemies for their own purposes."

From this *delicacy* of my friends, I took no notice whatever of their communications. But, from my determination to subjoin the preceding compendium (the full account is to follow) to my narrative, I thought a copy of the affidavit, as corrected and *enlarged* by me, to which, *I aver*, I offered to swear, on the *simple* condition already mentioned, might be expected, I determined to subjoin it, if attainable. As Mr. Noble had informed me that Mr. Langley had carried it off, I thought that he was the only *proper* person to whom I could apply for a copy. Under this idea I wrote him the following note!

" SIR,

Some time ago, I applied to Mr. Noble for a copy of the affidavit of November 18th. as corrected and extended, on my request. He wrote me that you had taken the original with you.

I am,

I am, therefore, obliged to take the liberty of requesting that you may be so good as to give a *literal* copy of the same to the bearer, or permit him to take it. Excuse this trouble from,

Sir,

yours &c.

KEADY. WILLIAM STEEL DICKSON.

February 17th. 1812.

SIMON LANGLEY ESQ.

ARMAGH.

The preceding was duly delivered, and the result, as follows:

February, 18th. 1812.

Called on Simon Langley, Esq. with a note from Dr. Dickson requesting a copy of the affidavit of the 18th. of November last. He said he could not give it—he had it not—it was in higher hands—he had sent it to his man of business in Dublin—it was in possession of government---if he had it, he believed he would not give it as he thought Dr. Dickson might make an improper use of it. He had not even a copy—he acted with more caution—he was on his guard—Dr. Dickson need not have cast any aspersion on the magistrates as he had done—

In presence of } WILLIAM G. DICKSON,
James Dunlap. } *(a true copy)*
WM. G. D."

This

This account, or rather compend of an account, must, for the present, terminate here, though it is not impossible that it may be little more than a preface to a fuller and protracted detail. Be that as it may, I shall not subjoin question, remark, criticism, or reasoning, as a better opportunity may soon offer. Naked, I present facts to public view. Let sound sense and impartial judgment clothe them as they please.

February 24th. 1812.

APPENDIX, No. I.

I AM sorry that I cannot procure the Belfast News Letter, in which the remarkable fact, which I have mentioned, was published. However, as many of the gentlemen, whom I have mentioned, are still living, the fact, even now, can be well attested. In circumstances I may err; but, in my errors, exaggeration need not be feared, though, from the impressions of feelings, never to be eradicated, I shall write, rather from the accounts given me by Messrs. Sturrock and Cleland, and the two boys concerned, than any recollection of the news paper publication. My readers must perceive, from whom the different parts of the information came. The year I cannot mention with certainty, but think it was 1785, and the month July.

" One morning, after breakfast, when the numerous company dispersed, Robert Stewart proposed to Henry Sturrock to take a sail, for their amusement. This acceded to, they proceeded immediately to a small pleasure boat, always ready rigged. As they determined to set out alone, Mr. Stewart, prudently lashed down the oars, boat-hooks &c. before they made loose, that they might not be rolling through the boat. This done they set sail, and, the day being fine, had every prospect of a pleasing

cruise, in a lake from six to seven miles wide, in front of Mount-Stewart house. During the forenoon, Dr. Sturrock, accompanied by Mr. Cleland, took a walk to an elegant temple, situated on an eminence overlooking the lake. There, after enjoying the rich rural scenery around, Dr. Sturrock retired into the temple to indulge in his favorite luxury, a BOOK. Mr. Cleland was with him. The boys had been, for hours, cruising about the middle of the lake, when a small cloud, encreasing as it approached them, carried with it a violent gust of wind, hail, rain, and thunder. When the hail reached them, Master Stewart, clothed only in a cotton jacket, called young Sturrock who was better fortified, gave him the tiller, telling him to keep the boat as she lay, with sails shaking in the wind, till the gust should be over. This done, he ran into the foreden for shelter, but had scarcely entered, when the child having kept his hand too hard down, the boat came round, the sails filled aback, and she went to the bottom in several fathoms water. Having gone down by the stern, the boys came up together, with H. Sturrock's hands grasping the skirts of R. Stewart's jacket. R. Stewart, who was a most excellent swimmer, laid hold of the child and supported him, till the little swell, occasioned by the passing gust, subsided. So soon as Sturrock was capable of speech, he exclaimed: " O Robert, Robert, let me go. I must be drowned, at any rate. You may get to some

some of the islands, or swim till some boat pick you up." "No, Henry," said he, "we will live, or die, together." So soon as the curl had subsided, occasioned by the passing gust, Mr. R. Stewart reminded his younger friend, of what they had been reading a few days before; "that the human body was lighter, bulk for bulk, than water; and therefore, when water was unagitated, it would float in safety, provided the face was a little elevated above the level of the body. The child submitted to the experiment, and was saved. This accomplished, R. Stewart now regretted his caution in having lashed down the oars &c. which might have floated off when the boat sunk, and been of great use in the present emergency, by being placed under his younger friend, and securing him from sinking. Thinking, however, that something might have floated, which would be useful, he swam off and happily found the small board, which covers the water-room and the tiller. With these he returned in triumph; but could not succeed in getting them inserted under young Sturrock. Thus disappointed, he swam to a little distance, placed them under his own loins, and laid himself on the water beside his friend. While thus placed, it occured to him that, from the number of people employed in making kelp, on the different islands, a signal might attract the attention of some of them going backwards and forward. Under this idea, he commenced shouting, as loud as he could, and, as soon as

his shouts could be heard, at a distance, throwing up his hat into the air. This he did, following his hat and bringing it back, till his strength was exhausted, after which he returned to his station, and laid himself on the water beside his friend.

In the mean time, the gust and shower having passed the temple, three miles to leeward, Dr. Sturrock, not apprehending any danger, desired Mr. Cleland to look if the boys were returning. Mr. Cleland went to the window but remained speechless, Dr. Sturrock asked again, "are they returning?" Mr. Cleland continuing silent, he went to the window, and having cast his eye over the part of the lake, where they had been cruising, he exclaimed: "the gust has overset the boat; but, perhaps, they may have reached one of the islands. Get down one of the small boats, on the shore, immediately. Who knows but one, if not both, may be saved?" Mr. Cleland hurried to the shore, about two hundred yards distant, got a yawl leaned to the water nearly as far, and, with two men, rowed off for the place, where the boat had been last seen. Having nearly reached the supposed place, Mr. Cleland heard a shout. He called to the rowers, but they had not heard it; I suppose from the noise of the oars. He ordered them to pull on, in the direction from which the shout appeared to come. They did so. In a few minutes, Mr. Cleland heard another shout in the same direction.

tion. This also was unheard by the rowers. However, soon after, a third shout was heard by them all. After rowing a little farther, something dark-coloured was seen floating. Mr. Cleland exclaimed. " Pull on, boys, that is R. Stewar's black head. It was only his hat: Knowing, by the stream, their proper course, they pulled on, and soon saw Robert floating on the water. On hearing the sound of the oars, he called out, exhausted and chilled as he was: " Do not mind me; a little farther: O Henry, Henry!" A little farther Henry was discovered; both were taken into the boat, and brought safe on shore."

I have said that, *in circumstances*, from the lapse of time, I may have erred; but, if I have, it is not by exaggeration. If, of this I should be suspected, let the supicious apply to the authorities to which I have referred. Moral reflexion on this *astonishing* instance of *youthful friendship*, calm recollection, and *unterrifiable* fortitude, I shall not presume to offer. As to *fortitude*, he hath latterly given an instance much more expressive than that which I have mentioned. " Death before dishonor," is in every man's mouth. I shall only add that, in 1785, Mr. Stewart was only in his 16th. year, consequently unhackneyed in the *ways* of modern ambition, and a stranger to its allurements.

APPENDIX, No. II.

In my narrative, p. 36. I have promised a specimen of my correspondence in 1797, that some idea may be formed of my opinions and sentiments at that time. It will shew, at least, that I was not wholly employed in "treasonable and seditious practices, whatever may have been my secret designs. The first letter was in answer to one written in consequence of a proclamation then issued:

"My Dr. Sir,

I thought to have written you a long letter, but I have scarcely time to thank you for your kind recollection. As to your question, I scarcely know what to say. No proclamation can be legal that is pointed against legal meetings. But, I think there is reason to suspect that *no meetings whatever* are now to be permitted. You must have heard of the forcible dispersion of the King's county meeting, and the prevention of any meeting in county Kildare, by a declaration that it would, if convened, be dispersed by force. All, therefore, that I can say is "*that the power of peaceable deliberation seems to have fled with the rest of our privileges?*" I would add this: I think that *legal* meetings ought not to be intimidated by *illegal* threats, they may avail themselves of their *constitutional* right

of

of assembling, and leave it to *unconstitutional* force to execute its orders. Having thus, and you will allow, most wisely answered your question, let me put a question in my turn.

An idea has been just started here, of having, if possible, a petition from all the counties, stating the miserable state of Ireland, and pressing our immediate and just claim to a reform as the only measure left to restore the lost liberty of the country, and *to maintain the connexion with Great Britain.* The thing was mentioned to me only last night. The notion was, to send over two delegates from each county: the address itself to be, what it ought to be, *explicit* and *decisive.* I said, I would write to you upon it. Consider it, and let me know your opinion of it. I am always disposed to hope much from justice and reason. Surely, *if England is not actually dementated by Jupiter, in order to her perdition, she cannot but see that her existence stands singly upon her support from Ireland:* and if those horrors that have deformed Europe, for so long a time, could be averted from us, what a glorious triumph would it be of moderation over British folly, and Irish depravity. I do most extremely regret that nothing drives you hither. You would be of much use. God bless you, and give us better times, prays.

very truly yours.

May 20th. 1797.

To

To this letter I wrote the following answer, June 5th. 1797. That is, exactly *one round year before my arrest.*

My Dr. Sir,

I sit down to thank you for your very flattering letter, and to assure you that nothing could gratify me more than an opportunity, at this momentous crisis, of being occasionally with you and your *few* worthy associates—a crisis, when the greatest man in Ireland should feel happy in being the humblest instrument in rescuing an empire from inevitable ruin. For a time I must submit to circumstances which keep me at a distance from you: and as you do not even hint at Carrickfergus or Down, I fear, I am not to have the pleasure of seeing you this season. Under this idea, I write what follows. On Monday the 22d. May, thirty gentlemen of this county held a meeting, called by letter. The sketch sent me was adopted unanimously, without addition or alteration, as our petition. It has been printed, and is now circulating parochially, for subscription. Yesterday, every freeholder of my congregation, who attended public worship, subscribed it. The others will do the same before Thursday. We are to meet in Down, on Friday, to collect and engross the returns from the whole county, and appoint two or more gentlemen to present it to majesty. This idea I threw out to a number of gentlemen, individually, all of whom approved of it; but it was thought

thought unnecessary to propose it, in the form of a resolution, till our next meeting, when, I hope and believe, It will be unanimously adopted. The mention of this circumstance will be a full answer to your question. The idea of a strong petition, from each county, presented by a deputation from among themselves, appears to me more promising, if any thing can be promising, than any other. I am now to mention a circumstance, which I would wish to be attended to in all the counties, as I am convinced it would be of some use. In your late contest, the most plausible objection to reform was the villainous and groundless assertion, "*that the people would not be satisfied with it.*" From the moment you unfolded the plan to me, I made it the subject of discussion, during the assizes at Carrickfergus and Down, in all the large parties where I was. Since that time, I have done every thing I could, by word and letter, to know the mind of this quarter on that subject, and am happy in saying that I have not found a man whom it would not fully satisfy. It is the universal wish—the ultimatum of public desire. I am sorry to add that, if this is madly denied still, I shudder to think of consequences, as I am convinced the people will hazard every thing in that case, even death itself, rather than entail slavery on their posterity. That government may become wise ere it be too late, and prevent the dreadful experiment, is the first prayer of my heart. These

circumstances I stated fully, at the late meeting in Ballinahinch, where the fact was instantly admitted by all, as you will see by the last sentence, except one, in the inclosed paper. That sentence I would wish to have recommended to all the counties, that it may be publickly avowed, *by all, as far as it may be found real*, as it gives the lie direct, and, I believe, justly to the privileged calumniators of a loyal, though insulted and oppressed people. Perhaps, a short paragraph in the public papers, on that sentence, or the paper of which it is a part, from your expressive and impressive pen, might be of great use. I beg you to make the trial; and at the same time, to forgive the freedom I now use. But, why apologise? Apology cannot be necessary to you, in whose heart the redemption of your country has long holden the highest place. Should the multiplicity and magnitude of your concerns, and attention to more important connexions, leave you a few spare minutes, now and then, your devoting them to an occasional correspondence would ever be gratefully acknowledged by

&c. &c. &c.

To this letter I received the following note, written in haste, and without date.

My

My Dr. Sir,

I understand, the parliament is to be dissolved this night, or to morrow, so that the minister has clearly given up all idea of giving this wretched country a reform. I have communicated and talked your idea of a general petition. I suspect that our approbation of it is chiefly on the credit of the suggestors. God knows, and he only, what we may be reserved for. The state of things about us here is, every hour, becoming more horrible—we are willing to try any expedient, such as you propose. Let us, therefore, know if you continue in the same opinion. I have not a moment to say more."

This specimen, of my correspondence in 1797, I have submitted to the public, merely to shew that all my time, attention, and labor was not engrossed by the practices ascribed to me.

APPENDIX, No. III.

THE name of Stewart I have frequently mentioned, for different reasons, and with feelings widely different. One of these reasons, as I have already said, was to express my high esteem of the father of the family, and my sincere gratitude for his kind attentions paid me in early life.

A second was to shew that his son, now earl of Londonderry, became representative of the rich and populous county of Down, not from a stupid respect to an overgrown fortune or long train of titled ancestors—not from mean adulation or facinating manners, nor base compromise with other great men to obtain a popular interest as a step to political power; but, from a confidence in his integrity, supported by the presumption that, with his father's fortune he would inherit his liberty and patriotism.

A third reason was to shew that such is the principle of the county of Down, that when the father's patriotism became problematical, the early and blooming virtues of the son retrieved the public confidence, called forth their affectionate support, and placed him in the seat, which his father had filled, in opposition to a combination of interests as formidable as ever candidate

candidate encountered: And, that from the same principle, when he had buried these virtues in the grave of Ireland's independence, they released him from the *slavery* of serving them, and left him at *liberty* to seek employment in the patriotic corporation of British borough-mongers.

Another reason, as will appear from the preceding narrative, was, that they were the cause of my first appearance, in a political character, and in their support all my exertions were made, previous to the year 1791, and that Alexander Stewart Esq. brother to the earl of Londonderry, was present at every meeting, which I attended, until late in 1793. They, therefore, could not be strangers, either to my political principles, or general character. In fact, they were so connected with every public act of mine, until that period, that the mention of their name appeared to me unavoidable.

My last reason was, that the early virtues, and engaging manners, of lord viscount Castlereagh might be known—virtues and manners, which, commanding the affection, esteem, and confidence of his native county, led him into the *high* way of honor and promotion, in which the end of his career is known to every body.

APPENDIX, No. IV.

THAT I was a most particular object of the attention, at least of subordinate governors, during and after my long confinement, must be evident from many parts of the preceding narrative. Mr. Pollock's strict examination of the other prisoners concerning me; his rejection of their submission to the Dublin compact, because my name was not affixed; the freedom taken with letters to my family in the post-office, Newtown-Ards; and, lastly, the rev. John Cleland's communications with Mr. Thomson, after my return to Ireland, all conspire to confirm the fact. At any rate, presuming on these, I was led into the *egotism*, of which notice may be taken.

APPENDIX, No. V.

I have said that, " somehow, or other, Mr. Curran was led into such confusion of ideas," from the manner, in which he had heard Mr. Cleland spoken of, " that, from his language, it was very uncertain whether he considered him as a *huntsman*, or a *blood-hound*—or *both*."

Every man, who has ever heard Mr. Curran speak, or read his speeches, at the bar, in the senate, or from the bench, will be surprised that I should bring such a charge against him—a man, whose correctness of expression can be equalled only by the brilliancy of his wit, the undefined extent of his intellectual resources, the fertility of his genius, the eloquence of his tongue, and, what is more than all, his *unimpeachable political integrity, through all the variety of scenes and circumstances, which the last twenty years have presented to the eyes and* FEELINGS *of Irishmen.*

As I have made the charge, I hope I shall be excused for tracing the foundation, on which it rests, as it shall be my only apology.

At the Spring assizes, 1797, several trials, affecting life, were to take place, and in which, party-influence

party-influence was suspected. Hence, on the commencement of the first trial, the array was challenged. The rev. John Cleland was examined, at great length, relative to his interference with the sheriff in the return of a pannel. I shall not recite the examinations, on this occasion, nor the observations of counsel to which they gave rise. The triers appointed sustained the pannel, and the business went on.

The first trial developed such a scene of prevarication, and worse than prevarication, as an honest mind could hardly suppose possible; and the prisoners were acquitted.

On the Friday following, the array was again challenged, and the rev. John Cleland underwent another long examination. This examination I shall pass by, as I have passed the former, leaving my readers to judge of it, by an extract from the report of Mr. Curran's speech, by which it was followed; and this I shall give merely to shew the seeming perplexity of mind, and consequent confusion of language in which Mr. Curran was entangled, respecting the real character of Mr. Cleland.

" He (Mr. Cleland) has more than once positively sworn that he applied to the high-sheriff—that he struck off no names but those who wanted freeholds; but to-day he finds that freeholders

freeholders were struck off by *his own pen*—he tells you, my lord, and gentlemen triers, with equal modesty and ingenuity, that he has made a—*mistake*. He returns *eighty-one* names to the sheriff. He receives blank summonses, fills what he deems convenient, &c. &c. Gracious God! what are the courts of justice? What is trial by jury? What is the country brought to? Were it told in the courts above—were it told in other countries—were it told in Westminster hall—that such a man was permitted to return near one half of the grand pannel of the county from *one particular* district—a district under severe distress—a district to which he is agent, and, on which, with the authority he possesses, he is able to bring great calamity, would it be believed?

He ascends the pulpit with the gospel of benignity and peace; he endeavours to impress himself and his hearers with its meek and its holy spirit. He descends, throws off the purple, seizes the insurrection act in the one hand, and the whip in the other—flies by night and by day after his game—and, with his heart panting, his breath exhausted, and his belly at the ground in the chace, he turns round and tells you that his mind is unprejudiced—that his heart is full of humanity—and, that all his hopes, fears, and wishes, are a pure innocent mixture of milk and water."

Now, whether the preceding be considered as a real representation *taken from the life*, or merely as a fanciful forensic caricature, is nothing to the purpose. I do not pretend to determine whether it is the one or the other, or a compound of both; or of more than both. Be that as it may, had the orator adhered to simple nature, his words would never have presented to the imagination such a figure. Indeed, the facts exhibited, and as it would seem, by the report, *acknowledged*, were irreconcileable to the idea of *pure, honest, unadulterated human nature.* Hence, his sensibilities may have hurried him back into the regions of fable, and recollection presented to his fancy,

"Hydras, Gorgons, and Chimeras dire."

And hence, taking the whole scene reported, and of which he is said to have been a witness, as something more than an airy dream or frantic vision, he has represented his chimera with hands to hold up the insurrection act as his warrant, and brandish his whip as a signal for flogging—with wings, no doubt, of an eagle, vulture, or dragon, to pursue and secure the higher objects of his chace, as is implied in the words "flies by night and by day after his game."—And four feet to run down the swinish herd, and all the varieties of the reptile race. This seems necessary to

to justify the expressions, " heart panting, breath exhausted, and belly at the ground, in the chace."

This is the only supposition, on which I can account for the seeming perplexity of mind and confusion of language, with which I presumed to say, that " it was uncertain whether Mr. Curran considered Mr. Cleland as a huntsman, as a bloodhound, or both." Be that as it may, the figure must be more than half-caricature. The rev. John Cleland, surely, never *sat* for such an ungainly picture !

THE END.

[PRINTED BY J. STOCKDALE, 71, ABBEY-STREET.]

APPENDIX.

THREE

SERMONS

ON THE SUBJECT OF

SCRIPTURE POLITICS.

JOHN, chap. 18. verse 26. *"My kingdom is not of this world."*

THE extraordinary power displayed in the miracles of Jesus, and the benevolence with which it was exercised, seem to have produced a general disposition to receive him, as the great deliverer, which prophecy had foretold to the people of Israel. And when they saw him raising the dead, and feeding multitudes in the Wilderness with a few loaves and small fishes, they concluded that, as he could thus easily support armies, and rescue the slain from the hand of death, he would realize the hopes of temporal dominion, with which they had been long intoxicated, and urged him to assume the title of King.

As this overture was founded on mistaken apprehensions of his kingdom, instead of compli-

ance, he endeavoured to correct the prejudices from which it proceeded, and the passions connected with them. But they were so firmly attached to the hopes, which ambition and revenge had long cherished, that they were offended; turned that resentment against him, of which they had attempted to make him the instrument; joined issue with his enemies in a scandalous prosecution, and obliged the governor of Judæa to consent to his death.

The most remarkable circumstance in this transaction, is that on which they founded their accusations. They charged him with the seditious designs, in which they had laboured in vain to engage him; and, as they pretended, they brought their charge, *merely* because his claims were unfriendly to Cæsar.—That Cæsar, whose *chains* they wished to shake off; in overthrowing whose empire they would have gloried, and in opposition to whom, they had endeavoured, by compulsion, to make him a king.

The roman governor, before whom the charge was exhibited, was aware of the base motives on which it was urged, and fully satisfied of the innocence of Jesus. He knew, that "through envy they had delivered him up," yet he seems to have suspected that some of his claims might have been expressed in terms which might justify the construction which had been put upon them. Perhaps, he had connected some of the

the extravagant epithets which the stoic philosophy bestowed upon its wise men, with the ideas of that exalted wisdom which Jesus taught; and imagined that, in such a sense, he had arrogated to himself the name of king. Be this as it may, he desired to know whether, in any sense, he assumed this title, and what that sense was.

To Pilate's inquiries on this subject, Jesus admitted, in answer, that he was a king; but informed him that his claims, as such, did not interfere with those of the Emperor, from whom Pilate derived his authority, and to whom he owed allegiance; and added a circumstance, from which he might be assured that this information was true.

"My kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I might not be delivered to the Jews; but now, is my kingdom not from hence."

Whatever ideas pilate entertained of the kingdom of Jesus, from the declaration it is evident that he did not imagine there was any interference between it and the interests of Cæsar; or that his loyalty could be impeached on account of the lenity with which he treated him: for he immediately went out and declared publicly, that he found "* in him no fault at all."

* John 18. 38.

However favourable this may appear to the character and pretensions of Jesus, no satisfying argument can be deduced from it in favour of christianity. Pilate had no fixed principles, nor any clear views of it, to enable him to pronounce upon its merits. The only obvious conclusion was that which he formed, by connecting the idea of "kingdom" with that of "bearing witness to the truth," that a man who professed only to teach and support truth, and acted agreeably to his profession, could not be an enemy to good government, or the interests of society.

Yet many inquiries remain concerning *truth in general*, and particularly, concerning christianity as teaching *the truth*, or exhibiting just views of the various and important subjects of which it treats. But as it would be impossible to comprise them all in the bounds of a sermon, we shall confine our attention at present to one which arises directly from the declaration before us.

Previous to the discussion of this inquiry, it may not be improper to ascertain the meaning of the declaration itself.

"This World," from its inordinate influence on the passions and conduct of men, is often contrasted with "the Father" who is the source of all good; and from the distresses, in which the immoderate

immoderate love of it involves them, to "Heaven," which is the seat of perfect happiness. Hence, those who devote themselves principally to the indulgence of appetite, are said to be "of the world;" whilst those who cherish more exalted sentiments, and pursue the more valuable attainments of wisdom, truth, and virtue, are denominated "of the Father." Thus Christ addressed the Jews; whose prejudices and worldly attachments rendered them blind to the purposes of Heaven: "* Ye are from beneath, I am from above: Ye are of this world, I am not of this world." In the same sense he used the phrases frequently in his discourses to, and concerning, his disciples: "† Because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." Again, "‡ I have given them thy word, and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."

These passages shew that, "to be of the world," is to adopt the designs, indulge the passions, or engage in the pursuits which center in it. And to be "not of the world," is to be free from their destructive influence.

In this sense the phrase applies as strictly to collective bodies as to individuals. They also take their characters from the ends which they have

* John 8, 23. † 15, 19. ‡ 17, 14.

have in view, and the means by which they propose to accomplish them. The character, therefore, which is here given of christianity, may be comprehended under the following particulars;

I. It did not originate from worldly policy.

II. It doth not affect pomp, magnificence, and perishable wealth, which flatter the vanity, and gratify the ambition and avarice of men.

III. It disclaims every idea of being extended by violence, or supported by oppression. And,

IV. It exercises no dominion over men, but what truth and righteousness fully justify, and the reason of its subjects must ever approve and rejoice in.

These characters of the Messiah's kingdom admit of an easy and clear illustration. They are strongly marked in the prophetic writings; in the declarations and conduct of Jesus and the ministrations of the apostles, by whom its influence was extended. They lead us to the original and proper idea of it, as founded in truth and righteousness, having its seat in the hearts of men, consisting in goodness, gentleness, and peace; and supported by its own intrinsic excellence, and the powerful attestations which prove that "it is of the Father."

But

But though christianity be a system purely moral and religious—though it be not marked with the characters of human policy, nor dependent on it; we are not to conclude that it bears no relation to civil government, or is unconcerned in the laws by which it is regulated. This would be a conclusion, rash, unwarranted, and dangerous. It would at once remove the strongest barrier, which ever hath been, or ever can be, opposed to the passions of men.

We shall, therefore, enquire how far, and in what manner the kingdom of Christ is, or ought to be connected with the kingdoms of the world; or in other words, how far, and in what manner religion and politics are related.

In this enquiry, the kingdom of Jesus is to be considered as a system of pure and universal morality, enforced from religious considerations. That this system hath man as its object, and in all its parts, tends to his improvement and happiness, will not be denied in this place. We may add too, that it respects him in every relation in which he may be placed, as this is necessarily implied in the idea of universal morality.

This morality, which is the great object of religion, and ought to be the basis of all government, is in itself unchangeable; and, under whatever form it hath been exhibited, or motives enforced, in the different stages of civilization, is intrinsically the same.

Should

Should this remark be thought to require any illustration, revelation amply supplies it. We can hardly conceive of any systems more widely different, in many particulars, than the two which form its principal contents. The one is calculated for a particular people, proposes to keep them distinct from all the nations of the earth, is loaded with rites and ceremonies, and confines its prospects to the present life. The other presents itself to all mankind, proposes to abolish distinctions in respect to religious privileges, and unite the whole in one great family; is divested of the artificial aid of ritual observance, and brings forward all the treasures of immortality to enrich its votaries, and its horrors to appal the spirit of iniquity. Yet with all this difference of circumstance and motive, the morality of both is exactly the same. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbour as thyself."

As these general precepts comprehend the sum of human duty, they express the principles by which it should be regulated, and are the great objects of both systems.

In the latter of these precepts, it is taken for granted, that men are uniformly *endued* with the principle of self-love, in a degree sufficient to impel them to the pursuit of happiness. And as this principle is the standard, by which the love

love of others is to be regulated, the least which can be inferred is, that those, who acknowledge the authority of the precepts, should so far cherish the benevolent affections, as is necessary to engage them in promoting and securing the happiness of others. With this inference the descriptions of the love enjoined in the gospel, and the effects which it ought to produce, are perfectly conformable. It restrains from injury, disdains the narrow limits of religious or political associations and rises superior to enmity and nsult. " * Love worketh no ill to his neighbour; suffereth long and is kind; envieth not; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth." Nor are the claims of christianity satisfied by that indolent complacency which expresseth itself, only in unavailing wishes of prosperity, or fair professions of good-will. The love which it enjoins must press forward into action; set opposition and dangers at defiance; and, if the public good requires, bravely encounter death itself. " † Let us not love in word, nor in tongue, saith the apostle, but in deed and in truth." " ‡ To do good, and to communicate, forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." And saith Jesus, " This is my commandment, that ye love one another, even as I have loved you." " Love

* Rom. 13, 10. 1 Cor. 13. 4, 6. † 1 John, 3, 10.
‡ Heb. 13, 16.

your enemies, bless them who curse you, do good to them who hate you, and pray for them who despitefully use you."

From these expressions we perceive that, as christianity inculcates the generous affections, the happiness of man is the great end which it proposes, to which it directs his activity, and to the promotion of which it lends its solemn sanctions. And the more any relation in life affects this happiness, the more important it becomes, and the more immediate object of religious inspection and religious influence.

Among these relations, various and interesting as they are, that which binds an individual to the state of which he is a member, is the most important. In it the influence of one may occupy a wide extended circuit, and materially affect the security and happiness of many. Nay! the instances are not infrequent of kingdoms rescued from the very brink of destruction, by the wisdom or prowess of an individual; while on the other hand, we have seen empires hurled from the summit of prosperity into the gulph of confusion, and all their proud trophies buried in ruins, at the feet of one ambitious mortal. On it the duties of subordinate relations depend for protection, and, from their tendency to raise men to the exalted character of citizens, much of their importance is derived. This too must ever

ever vary with the extent of a state, as duties and ranks multiply in proportion to its increase.

However all this variety of rank is comprehended in the general division of men into magistrate and subject, the former of whom is entrusted with the execution of laws, which the latter have sanctioned with their approbation, and to which they are amenable. The laws which respect this arrangement, and mark the reciprocal duties, of which it lays the foundation, have received the name of politics, and constitute a most interesting branch of morality, considered as a science.

In the first stages of society, and in small states, subordinate distinctions are few. Hence their internal politics are simple, and comprised in small bounds. A moderate share of prudence and sagacity, connected with personal courage, a sense of justice, and patience of hardship, are sufficient for all the purposes of counsel or war. In ordinary circumstances, old age, which is the repository of knowledge, and in which experience hath rescued the understanding from the influence of the more turbulent passions, holds the seat of executive justice; and when external dangers threaten, or counsels of war prevail, he, whose bravery and patience have been formerly proved is called forth to command, and the most implicit respect is paid to his authority. But as

soon as the cause for which he is promoted ceases to operate, his authority expires, and he sinks, as before, to a level with his brethren. However, if his exertions are crowned with success, his tribe is emboldened, new enterprizes are undertaken, and his appointment is renewed; the fame of his prowess spreads around, his alliance is courted, and fear induces a submission to his arms. Yet, still his authority expires with the enterprize for which it was given him.

But though his authority is short lived, the effects of it are often permanent. The nations whom his arms have subdued, or virtues conciliated, unite in one common interest, and become objects of jealousy or fear to all their neighbours. Hence combinations are formed to check their growing power, and balance their influence.

Thus states proceed from small to great; and in this process, the face of things takes a new aspect and complexion. As population increases, the necessaries of life come into greater demand. And, as the resources of nature fail, after many struggles, art is called in to her assistance. Hence originates private property; and the variety of success which attends the efforts of individuals, in time, lays the foundation of a permanent distinction in ranks. He who is indolent

dolent or unsuccessful, must submit to him whose labours have produced more than his wants require: And dependence for bread gives an influence, which is often lasting, and generally increases, as superiority in wealth prevails.

This inequality supplies new matter to excite and employ the dissocial passions. Pride demands humiliating expressions of the dependence which wealth hath created; ambition aspires to an increase of power; whilst poverty, *galled by insult* and *oppression*, complains, that power is overstretched; becomes clamorous and turbulent, and labours to throw off the painful yoke. Hence endless discord is introduced, and, in its effects, plainly demonstrates, that something more stable and just, than the capricious will of an interested individual, is necessary to ascertain the rights, regulate the interests, and secure the happiness of men united in society.

The conviction of this gives a new turn to human affairs. Laws are established as standards of right; and one, or a few, are deputed to give them activity, and regulate their execution. Hence, as government stands on fixed principles, it takes a regular form; and this form is originally modelled by the prevailing taste or circumstances of the state.

It appears, in general, that states delegated but a small part of their power at first. A jealousy

lousy of their rights induced them to reserve matters of national concern for national debate. Accordingly in new-born states, war and peace were never determined but in the public assembly of the people. But as population increased, and territories were enlarged, such assemblies became inconvenient, and sometimes impossible, even on the most important occasions. Hence, more extensive delegations were adopted; and the most valuable interests, and solemn deliberations, were intrusted to a few.

These delegations, however well adapted to the purposes for which they were made, seem to have been early perverted. Power is always intoxicating; and whatever the sources or means of power may be, ambition will endeavour to perpetuate and increase it. In these struggles for pre-eminence the more knowing or powerful prevail; success secures friends; and authority is erected on the basis of corruption. Sometimes indeed, the very fear of tyranny creates tyrants; and the apprehension of slavery gives birth to despotism. In the hardy struggles which men make for liberty, some favourite patron is called in, by whose generous efforts the dreaded evils are averted for a season. On such occasions the overflowings of gratitude despise all bounds. An infatuated people throw themselves into the arms of a deliverer, as if he rose superior to human infirmities. But alas! experience

rience soon proves the contrary. He, in turn, is intoxicated with power; he considers unlimited submission as scarcely adequate to his past services; and popular confidence lulls suspicion asleep, 'till he rivets the chains of slavery too fast to be broken without violence and convulsion. In this case, resistance is branded with the name of rebellion; and the complexion of rebellion darkened with the charge of ingratitude.

But in whateyer manner these changes are introduced, and power centered in individuals, the event is the same. All governments tend to despotism; and by degrees, more or less rapid, terminate in it.

From all these circumstances, taken together, we see, that the desire of security and peace gave birth to civil societies; and that all the revolutions, in the mode of governing them, have arisen from it. We see too, that all civil authority is originally derived from the people; that no individual hath any right to govern but what they bestow; and, of consequence, that their protection, safety, and happiness are, or *ought to be*, the great ends of government; and the supreme law to which all others should be subordinate.

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This doctrine, however ungrateful to ambition, will ever be supported by reason and humanity. The spirit of despotism may counteract, but cannot invalidate, or disprove it. Indeed it carries its evidence in its own bosom; and in its certainty, brings us to an important point in the present inquiry. It shews us that the end of christianity and good government is the same; and consequently, that in this important particular, religion and politics are inseperably connected.

If this end be the happiness of mankind, as we have endeavoured to shew, we are led from it to a conclusion of great importance. We are obliged to acknowledge, either that this happiness may be attained and secured by means essentially different; or that, in them also, the connexion between religion and politics must be preserved inviolate.

This alternative can never subject us to any difficulty. Experience shews, that virtue alone leads to true happiness: and religion inculcates virtue, as the only mean to promote and secure *it*, and the favour of God, with whom the treasures of it remain. In this view it marks distinctly the duties of every relation, and claims an authority to enforce them. It represents every individual as under the cognizance, and subject to the controul of Heaven: And from

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the influence which men in authority may have and ought to use, in the cause of virtue, it speaks of magistrates, in particular, as the ministers of God: *i. e.* as servants acting under him in promoting that happiness which is the great end of his administration. When they depart from this character, revelation charges them with guilt, commands repentance, and points out the measures by which the destructive tendencies of injustice and oppression may be corrected, "* Thus, saith the Lord God; remove violence and spoil; execute judgment and justice; take away your exactions from my people." "† Loose the bands of wickedness; undo the heavy burdens; let the oppressed go free; and break every yoke." "‡ Keep mercy and do judgment; "‖ For mercy and truth uphold the king; his throne is established by righteousness." It marks also, the popular effects of such conduct, and contrasts it with the issue of licentiousness and oppression. "§ When the righteous is in authority, the people rejoice; but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn."

From the certainty of these observations, and the many temptations to which magistracy is exposed, revelation asserts, that a sense of religion is the only principle on which their influ-

* Ezek. 5. 9. † Isa. 5. 6. ‡ Hos. 12. 6.
‖ Pro. 20. 28. Isa. 16. 4. § Prov. 29. 2.

ence can be counteracted; and prescribes it as an dispensable quality in men who are to be intrusted with civil power. " * Provide, out of all the people, able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness :" " † Wise men, and understanding, known among your tribes, and place such to be rulers over you ;" " For he that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.‡"

There is a circumstance in these words, which is too important to be overlooked. While they strongly mark the characters of men, who may be safely intrusted with civil authority, they give a solemn sanction to an observation already made. They resolve all authority into the appointment of the people ; and place the rights of choice and investiture entirely in them.

But though this be the case, we are not to suppose that revelation places the people above the reach of government and law. Every individual owes subjection to the state : and though magistracy derives its power from the people, it possesseth also the sanction of divine approbation. To them, who rule with uprightness, honor, respect, and obedience are justly due, and strictly injoined by the word of God. " * Let

* Exod. 18. 21. † Deut. 1. 13. ‡ 2 Sam. 23. 3.

" * Let every soul be subject to the higher powers; not only for wrath, but for conscience sake. Render to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor." " † Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man, for the Lord's sake; whether it be to the king as supreme, or unto governors, who are sent by him, for the punishment of evil doers, and the praise of them who do well."

The Jewish law consigned those who disobeyed magistrates, in the exercise of their duty, to " ‡ imprisonment, confiscation of goods, banishment, or death," according to the nature of their crimes: and christianity carries its vengeance still farther; and declares " ‖ that the Lord knoweth how to reserve the unjust to the day of judgment; but *chiefly* those who despise government, and speak evil of dignities." Still, however, religion admits, that disobedience is criminal, *only* when the power of the magistrate is exercised " *for the punishment of evil doers, and the praise of them who do well.*" When this order is inverted, magistracy violates the principle upon which it was established; every claim to respect and obedience is cancelled; and resistance becomes, not only lawful, but

 necessary

* Rom. 13. 1. 5. 7. † 1 Pet. 2. 13. ‡ Ezra. 7. 26.
‖ 2 Pet. 9. 10.

necessary and honourable. On this principle the midwives of Egypt have immortalized their names; the army of Saul will be mentioned for ever, in terms peculiarly honorable; and the name of Daniel will be remembered with reverence, as long as sun and moon endure.

Upon the whole, the kingdom of Christ claims a strict connexion with the kingdoms of the world. It challengeth authority over them, marks distinctly, the duties of every station; and injoins the performance of them by its solemn sanctions.

Should it be asked, "How far doth this connexion extend?" what hath been offered on this subject, will help us to a ready answer. It extends to every measure which can affect the persons, reputations, properties, or enjoyments of men. Whatever, therefore, is unfriendly to human happiness or improvement, tends at once to defeat the end of the Gospel, and of good government: And the neglect or abuse of the powers and means by which these may be promoted, argues a want of that spirit, which the former was intended to inspire, and the latter must cherish for its own support.

The only circumstance, relative to government, over which religion does not claim controul, is the form under which it may be administered. It leaves this as matter of perfect indifference,

difference, and, provided the end of government is accomplished, it allows the taste and circumstances of states to determine, whether their executive powers shall continue in the body at large, be intrusted to a few, or resigned entirely into the hands of an individual.

Having proceeded thus far, it remains to inquire, in what manner religion and politics are connected. However obvious the answer to this inquiry may appear, from what hath been already offered, it seems to have been almost universally mistaken. Though men have seldom denied the reality of this connexion, yet they have arranged the parties connected in an order which reason and the nature of things disclaim, and religion must ever abhor. Though politics is only a part of morality; and though religion comprehends the whole, and gives it energy by her solemn sanctions, yet the part assigned to religion is subordinate to policy, and the dependence to which she hath been reduced, truly humiliating. She hath been shackled by forms of human device, as if the parent of happiness was in danger of destroying her favourite issue; bedizened with ceremonies, as if such taudry ornaments could add to her native beauty; fortified by penal statutes, and guarded by gibbets, racks, and flames, as if the solid arguments, on which she rests her claims, and the

power

power of God,—the only power which she acknowledges—were not sufficient to protect and support her.

The effects of this arrangement have fully proved that it is not more impious, than it is absurd. *Impious* it is, because God alone is the light of the understanding, and Lord of conscience: And it *must be absurd,* as opinion is independent, even of him who holds it. It owns no influence but that of evidence; and as this may vary, it will continually change. It is *even worse* than absurd. It hath sacrificed religion to appearances—realities to a shadow—by diverting the attention of mankind from the important matters of the law, with which their interests, improvement, and happiness, are inseparably connected; and instead of that mild and gentle spirit, which proclaims glad tidings, and diffuses peace and joy among men, it hath substituted a dæmon which sounds the trump of war, spreads havock and desolation through the world, and deluges the earth with human blood.

The same presumption which hath degraded religion to a slave, and armed her with terrors and death, hath attempted to subject the Deity to human policy, and render his power subservient to the passions of men. Examples of this are scarcely noticed in the history of the heathen

heathen world. From the extraction and character of their gods they seem perfectly natural. When we reflect that Mercury was a thief, and Venus a prostitute, we cannot be surprised that the one should be invoked in schemes of theft and rapine, and the other of debauchery. And when we consider Jupiter as the usurper of his father's throne, and tyrant of Heaven, we are prepared to see tyrants bow the knee before him, and regale his priests with smoking victims, whilst states invoke his patronage in aid of violence and oppression. Here religion is the natural parent of corruption; and the grossest enormities take shelter under the example of the gods.

Though the character of the true God is widely different from those of the heathen world, yet we find the same attempts, which we have mentioned, made to interest him in the cause of iniquity. When states have adopted schemes of conquest, whether from avarice, ambition, or revenge; religion is strained hard to justify their execution; its ministers are made the echoes of political mandates; and Heaven's lofty arch resounds with loud invocations to God, that he would divest himself of his excellence, accommodate his will to the passions of men, and bless their attempts to undo his creation, and defeat the designs of his gracious providence.

Whoever

Whoever thinks seriously, for one moment, will perceive that, as this is an office abhorrent from the nature of God, it is also founded upon a station to which he rises far superior. As he leans not on the feeble authority, he will not stoop to become the pliant tool of human policy, or abject slave to passions which he implanted at first, for wise and good purposes, and hath an absolute right to controul and regulate.

From these things we may conclude, that religion is not connected with politics, as an equal, much less as a dependent. Every argument which proves that God hath a right to govern the world; and that revelation comes from God; proves also, that the principles of revelation should regulate the counsels and designs of men; and that human laws can never justify measures, which those of God condemn.

This principle is urged with remarkable strictness under the Jewish dispensation. On all important occasions recourse was had to the law, before any important decision in public affairs was made; and, lest magistrates should err in their duty, they are injoined to have a copy of the law for their private perusal, and to devote a part of every day to the study of it. " * When thou art come unto the land, which

* Deut. 17, 14, 15, 18, 19.

which the Lord thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like as all the nations which are about me: Thou shalt, in any wise, set him king over thee, whom the Lord thy God shall chuse. And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book, out of that which is before the priests the Levites: And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life; that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law, and these statutes to do them."

The same principle is laid down for the direction of subordinate rulers, with this additional circumstance, " * that in matters of difficulty, they should have recourse to the priests, whose office it was to expound the law, and that the sentence pronounced by them should be final.

The conduct of Israel, for many ages, was generally conformable with this precept; and on great political emergencies, the circumstances of which came not immediately under the notice of the law, the priests or the prophets were consulted, and their voices implicitly obeyed.

* Deut. 17, 8, 13.

If the politics of the Jews were thus subjected to the morality of their religion; does it not evidently follow that the same morality, under the gospel dispensation, should regulate, with commanding influence, the politics of states professing christianity? This conclusion is so just and obvious, that it cannot be denied; and I am convinced it will be adopted in this assembly, with that candor and cordiality, which its importance justly claims.

In the strength of this conviction, permit me to subjoin a few plain inferences from what hath been discoursed on this subject. And 1st. As the kingdom of Christ is not of this world —As it did not originate from worldly policy; doth not join issue with the passions or prejudices of men; disclaims the aid of violence and oppression; and arrogates to itself no authority but what truth and righteousness should possess over the minds and conduct of men: we may infer that every attempt to influence belief, or regulate modes of worship among men, by human policy or power, is inconsistent with its spirit. It is a kingdom purely moral and religious; morality and religion are personal: and the religious belief of every individual must depend upon the light in which religious subjects are presented to his understanding.

2dly. As christianity proposes the happiness of mankind as its end, prohibits the violation of

of his person, character, property, and denounces its judgments against those who counteract it: we may infer that every act of perfidy, oppression, cruelty, and injustice is highly offensive to that merciful and righteous God, from whom it derives its solemn sanction. If this inference be just, in respect to individuals who fill the private walks of life; it cannot be less so, in regard to those, who, from more elevated stations extend their influence through a wider circle; or states, the effects of whose rapacity and ambition, are still more dreadfully destructive. As Jesus came to subdue the passions of men, direct them into proper channels, and regulate their influence; all offensive wars, for wealth, empire, fame, or even religion itself, are evidently inconsistent with his character and dominion. We can never suppose that he would forbid the poor man to purloin a morsel of bread, or lift his hand against his neighbour, under pain of damnation, and yet, suffer the great to plunder and destroy with impunity; or states to deluge the earth with blood. The thought is too big with absurdity to find reception, for a moment, in an enlightened mind.

To us, my revd. fathers and brethren, who hold the character of ministers, under the messiah's kingdom, what hath been offered upon this subject, applies with more than common

force. We have undertaken the dispensation of a trust, the most important which can be committed to mortals—A trust, on the discharge of which, it is universally acknowledged, the improvement and virtue of multitudes depend. Nor do the duties of our office affect men as individuals only. From the connexion of religion with politics, and the authority which she claims over the kingdoms of the world, we derive a political character highly important, and become the dispensers of that knowledge which unfolds and ought to regulate their political interests; and patrons of that virtue which alone can secure them. While, therefore, we point the way to Heaven in our religious character, let us not forget the duties of the other; or the additional weight which love of country may give to the distant prospects of futurity. Let us consider that while true patriotism stands on virtue as its base, it rears its head above the regions of mortality, and claims an interest in that eternal world where truth and righteousness shall reign for ever, without controul: And let us endeavour to infuse into the minds of our people a full persuasion that strict honor, incorruptible integrity, and inviolable attachment to truth and righteousness, are absolutely necessary to national prosperity; and that without them patriotism is a bubble, and religion only an empty name.

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The present situation of this our native country affords us but too many melancholy opportunities of introducing and inculcating this interesting truth. While every village murmurs complaints against the corruption of superiors, and charges the representatives of the people, and the nobility of the nation, with corruption, venality, and evil design, are not we called upon to remind them that their own meanness, venality, and corruption are the sources of all? Do not the representatives derive their powers from the voice of the people? And doth not the people—that very people which complains so loudly—prostitute its voice for a smile—a promise—nay, a nights debauch? If our duty binds us to reprove and exhort, surely here reproof and exhortation are loudly called for; and by administering them, in due season, we would check corruption at its sources, and become the guardians of that liberty which is the parent of national prosperity, and source of every earthly blessing.

Further, we ought particularly to cherish and diffuse that liberal spirit in religion, which views the Redeemer as sole Lord in his own kingdom; and all christians as *his* subjects, and accountable *to him alone in religious matters.* We should endeavour to banish that blind and tyrannic dæmon which can see no worth, but in the name of party, and under the claim of liberty,

liberty, is busied only in the forgery of chains. We have much reason to rejoice and be thankful, that the influence of this dæmon hath long been declining in our country. That it may soon be annihilated for ever is an event devoutly to be wished! We have lately seen toleration extend her soothing arms, and offer an embrace unknown before. Let us rejoice in the prospect which this opens before us; and let us join our helping hand to extend them wider still. Since policy hath so far foregone her claims over religion, let us endeavour to raise the kingdom of Christ to its proper dignity, and reduce its connexion with the kingdoms of the world, to those principles by which it ought to be regulated for ever.*

* I have mentioned in the preface, that this sermon was preached before the G. Synod of Ulster, in June 1781, and that I thought myself warranted in saying, from the approbation with which it was honored, that the sentiments expressed in it, then were the sentiments of that reverend assembly. That they continued to be so, for many years, is undeniable, from their "Address to Majesty" in 1792, and "Declaration" in 1793. That they still are, and ever will be their sentiments, I most earnestly wish, and fondly hope.

Extracts of the before-mentioned address and declaration, I shall insert, or subjoin, unless the refusal of access to, or Extracts from, the Synod's Records, shall be sanctioned by that liberal body, and persisted in.

SERMON

SERMON II.

LUKE 2. 14. *"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace—good-will towards men."*

THE appearance of Christ is truly worthy of attention, admiration, and joy, in all its circumstances. The early period at which it was foretold, the variety and precision of the prophecies concerning it, the earnestness with which it was expected, the nature and extent of the blessings which it was to diffuse, and the astonishing manner in which it was announced, are equally remarkable.

The earnestness with which he was expected, may be easily accounted for, from the glories in which prophecy had delineated his kingdom, as to extent, duration, and supremacy; the revolutions it would occasion, and the blessings it would dispense. And the universality of this expectation arose from the successive dispersions of the Jewish people among the nations of the earth. In each of these they diffused a knowledge of their religion, their prophecies, and

and the events to which they pointed. And this knowledge, though greatly adulterated, in the impure channels through which it flowed, was preserved by tradition, till the coming of the son of man—the seed promised to Abraham, in which "all the nations of the earth should be blessed."—Its traces are said to be very discernible in the remaining fragments of eastern antiquity; they abound in the earliest monuments of Grecian literature; and from the same source, some of the finest pictures in Roman poetry, seem to have borrowed their brightest colouring.

The character in which Christ was expected, equally commands veneration and love. As a conqueror subduing nations, bringing thrones, dominions, and principalities under subjection, and establishing an universal empire, he appears with unequalled grandeur. But when we consider him as founding this empire on the eternal principles of justice, extending it by truth, supporting it by righteousness, cementing it by universal love, and good-will among men, and blending with its very essence, the seeds and the blessings of peace; he appears in all the charms of native loveliness—the image of divinity, and glory of man!

In this last character, he is commonly exhibited by the prophets; and his kingdom delineated

ated as a kingdom of peace. And in allusion to it, his birth is announced by Angels, as "tidings of great joy," with circumstances becoming the greatness of the event.—Circumstances, compared with which, the birth-night pageantry of earthly princes, with all the blaze of illumination, the pompous ode of a laurelled hireling, and the fashionable congratulations of the gayest court, appear as the mimickry of fantastic children. An angel of God is the herald, who proclaims the nativity of Sion's king—not to a crowded levee of expecting sycophants in a splendid palace—but to a few simple shepherds, in the fields of Bethlehem! Indication sure, that with innocence alone peace can dwell. A light supernatural—Emblem expressive of the glory of the Lord—illuminates the scene; while seraphs chant the enraptured song:. "Glory to God in the highest; and on earth peace—good-will towards men!"

What were the feelings of the simple shepherds during this scene of splendour and magnificence? Fear, curiosity, astonishment, and joy, must have occupied their souls in quick succession.

We are told indeed, that fear alone possessed them, on the first appearance of the Angel, and the unaccountable brightness, with which they were surrounded. "They were sore afraid."

afraid." But we may naturally suppose that this was immediately dispelled, when the Angel thus addressed them, with soothing words, "Fear not! for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto *all people.*"

As these words would naturally dispel their fears, they would as naturally excite their curiosity to know the tidings, fraught with good, not to a family or nation, but to *all people.* And when they were told that it was the birth of a Saviour—a long and anxiously expected Saviour —"Who was Christ, the Lord;" and heard it celebrated with seraph's song; astonishment and joy must have filled their hearts.

Though these circumstances must have made the first and strongest impressions on the minds of the shepherds; yet, when the Angels departed, and the supernatural light disappeared, they recollected one less striking, but of great importance, concerning which they wisely determined to be satisfied. When the Angel announced the birth of a Saviour, he told them that it had taken place in the city of David: And, as even this was not sufficiently explicit, he added, for their satisfaction: "This shall be a sign unto you; viz. that all I have told you is true—"Ye shall find the babe, wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger."

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Had not some such circumstance been proposed for their future investigation, they might probably have concluded, from the tumultuous emotions excited by the wondrous scene, and the astonishment in which it left them, that it might be only a splendid illusion, passing before the fancy in a dream or trance. But if the understanding could be satisfied, that it was real, there was no room for doubt concerning the rest. They, therefore, resolved to go immediately to Bethlehem; and as it appears, to say nothing of what they had seen and heard, till they knew whether a new-born child, so circumstanced, could be found there. "When the Angels were gone, they said, one to another, let us now go, even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which hath come to pass, which the Lord hath made known to us. And they came with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known *publicly*, the saying which was told them concerning this child."

The prudent caution of the shepherds on this occasion, is not more honorable to them, than instructive to the world Nor is it to be doubted but the evangelist had a view to such instruction, in the minute detail he has given of their conduct. And had it been attended to, ten thousand dreams of wild imagination,

which superstition or enthusiasm has fondly laid hold of, and published to the world, as revelations from God, would have been buried in silence, or rejected with contempt.

Be this as it may, the calm and prudent circumspection of the shepherds, in examining the circumstances of this astonishing scene, as it reflects honor on their memories, so it has secured credit to their narrative through all succeeding generations. Convinced as we are of its truth, nothing remains for us, as matter of inquiry, but the meaning of the angel's song; "glory to God in the highest; and on earth peace—good-will towards men;" and the improvement which we ought to make of it; as the professed subjects of "Christ the Lord."

And surely, no inquiry could come before us, with more propriety, on the day which we commemorate as the anniversary of his birth.—A day, which, while many of our profession are profaning by riot and debauchery, I trust we are devoting to better purposes.

But while I say this, I would not be thought to give the particular observance of this day a place in the catalogue of prescribed duties. Such observance is no where enjoined by Christ himself; nor has it any sanction, that I can find, either from the writings or example of his apostles. Still, however, I am convinced,

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as the observance is kept up, it is better to apply it to religious services, than spend it in dissipation, drunkenness, and blasphemy—a practice equally injurious to religion, inconsistent with the purpose of a Saviour's coming, and dishonorable to men.

In this conviction, let us proceed to the inquiries already mentioned, as arising from the angel's song.

In scripture, the phrases "to praise," and "give glory," are every where used in the same sense. And that this is a song of praise, is evident, from the manner in which it is introduced, "There was, with the angel, a multitude of the heavenly host praising God," and saying, "glory to God:" that is, "praise be to God," or, "let God be praised."

Commentators have widely, though as it appears, unnecessarily differed about the meaning of the words, "in the highest." Some refer them to the degree of praise, some to the rank of the beings *offering* it, and others to the place in which it is offered. According to the first, it signifies, "let God be praised in the highest degree;" the second, "by the highest orders of Angels;" and the third, "in the highest Heavens."

I say, this difference seems trifling and unnecessary, as all the three circumstances, to which they

they point, are nearly, if not inseparably, connected. According to common conception, the highest Heavens are the habitation of the most exalted Angels; and from the superior clearness of their preceptions of divine excellence, and the sublimity of their sentiments, their praises must be expressed in the loftiest strains which spirit can conceive, or language utter.

However, if these circumstances are to be separated, I am convinced the phrase principally relates to the highest orders of created beings, or Angels. In this I am confirmed by the manner in which it is expressed in the original, as connected with the last phrase in the verse, which undoubtedly ought to be rendered, "good-will among men." The song would then stand thus: "Glory to God among the highest: and on earth peace—Good-will among men." And the meaning is plainly this; that in the birth of messiah, foundation is laid for everlasting praise among the heavenly hosts, and peace and goodwill among men on earth.

That the appearance of messiah was an event which had engaged the attention, and given scope to the ministration of angels, from the earliest ages of the world, we cannot doubt, as many of the promises and prophecies, concerning it, were delivered through them. That they did not fully comprehend the great scheme

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to be executed by him; or the manner in, and means by, which it was to be accomplished, till they saw them in the event, we have strong reasons to believe. To this we are led by the declaration of the apostle Peter: "Into which things the angels desire to look;" that is, the things which the prophets had foretold, and the accomplishment of which the preachers of the gospel then reported to the persons, to whom the apostle wrote.

On the supposition of this their ignorance, and on it alone, their curiosity, or desire, to look into the things concerning Christ, can be accounted for: And by this curiosity, they would be incited to trace the hand of God, through all his dispensations to the posterity of Abraham, till the promised seed appeared.

In this pursuit, the varieties of fortune, which they experienced, their divisions among themselves, their dispersions and captivities, which frequently threatened their extinction as a nation, and spread a shade of improbability over the face of prophecy, would all appear before them. and the removal of this, by the full accomplishment of what was foretold, would enliven their sentiments of wonder, devotion, and joy, and give new animation to their songs of praise. To see all the various links of prophecy, continued in one uninterrupted chain, through

1600 years, terminating in the event of a moment—to see all improbabilities swallowed up in certainty—and the hidden things of ages irradiated by a lustre, bright as the glory of the Lord, must have raised admiration to the highest, and dictated a praise equally sublime!

Nor would the directing hand of sovereign wisdom, in conducting circumstances to the accomplishment of this momentous event, display more clearly the steadfastness of the counsels of God, than the happy revolution, to which it was preparatory, would exhibit the riches of his grace—grace to a world, long involved in wretchedness, through the blindness and corruption of their own hearts, and their unnatural barbarities, one to another.

From a circumstance already mentioned, in the character and office of angels, we cannot suppose them ignorant, either of the character or condition of men. By them, as was observed, many intimations of the will of God were communicated. With accounts of these, the old testament abounds, from beginning to end. Hence they are characterized as "ministering spirits, who minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation." In these ministrations, they must have become acquainted with the miseries of man, and all the sources from which they spring. And as Job introduces them

them as witnesses of the first creation, and "shouting for joy," when the morning stars, in harmonious order, proclaimed their marker's praise—As they were no strangers to him, in his native state of innocence and peace—and now witnessed the appearance of Messiah, king of righteousness, and promised prince of peace and love; man must be an object familiar to them, in all the variety of dignity and meanness, innocence and guilt, happiness and misery, through which he has passed.

Nor are we left to suppose that their feelings for him are less sensible, than their knowledge of him is clear. Love is the character, the life, and the spirit of Heaven. And where love is, misery must call forth the sensation of sorrow; and the prospect, or contemplation of happiness excite joy. Accordingly, our Saviour informs us, "that there is joy in the presence of angels, on the repentance of a sinner." There must, therefore, be sorrow on the apostacy of a saint. And if the conduct and fate of an individual can excite even the weakest emotion in heavenly minds, the wickedness or recovery —the misery or happiness of a world, must be an object infinitely more affecting.

If this idea be just, as it appears rational, what must have been the feelings of angels, for the degeneracy and wretchedness of man, fallen

from his native dignity, and lost to innocence! They had seen him rise from his maker's hand, with form erect, countenance elevated towards Heaven, and the image of divinity imprinted on his soul! They had seen him enrobed in native innocence, and rejoicing in conscious integrity! They had seen him, also, become vain in his imagination, entangled in the multitude of his own inventions, enslaved by corruption, and groaning under the chains of guilt and wretchedness: They had seen him at enmity with God—at enmity with himself—without peace—without hope—and without a comforter!

In exact proportion to the compassion and sorrow which these gloomy scenes called forth, must have been the joy of angels on the appearance of a Saviour fraught with the tidings of salvation, the blessings of peace, and the seeds of benevolence and good-will among men. And as this Saviour was the messenger of Heaven—the spontaneous gift of the father's love—for the redemption, recovery, and reconciliation of an enslaved and distracted world, generosity and devotion must have jointly inspired the angelic song of gratulation and praise: "glory to God among the highest; on earth peace; good-will among men!

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What was thus a subject of praise and congratulation to angels, who were only the messengers of glad tidings to others, should surely be a subject of gratitude and joy to men—men, to whom this peace was proclaimed, and among whom, good-will, as its parent, was to be cherished for ever.

That we may see this with clearness, and learn the improvement to which it leads, let us now consider the extent and importance of the peace here proclaimed.

Peace with God is the foundation of human hope, and human happiness. This peace is represented in scripture, as violated by idolatry, and every kind of wickedness. The former is called enmity against God, as deposing him from his sovereignty, and placing an idol in his stead; the latter, as violating his authority and withholding that allegiance which is due to him, as Lord of the universe. Peace with him, therefore, is restored in the one case, by reclaiming men from idolatry, to the belief, acknowledgment, and worship of him alone, as "the only living and true God;" and in the other, by turning them from their iniquities into the paths of righteousness. As these effects were eminently produced by the revelation of Christ, and of him alone, he is emphatically called "our peace:" and the apostle

declares, that, " we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

In this particular, the extent and importance of the peace proclaimed by the angels, is obvious and amazing. It reaches wide as the belief of the gospel has been, now is, or ever will be. It is important, as the first principle of true religion, with all the blessings of which it is productive. And how great that importance is, we may easily judge, by comparing the state even of the most ignorant nations of the christian world with those who sit in darkness—" who know not God, and obey not the Gospel." But what shall be its importance, when its extent shall become wide as the habitable world! When the fullness of the heathen shall become the inheritance of Christ, and the uttermost parts of the earth his possession! When enmity shall cease, and the universal prevalence of the gospel shall unite the hearts of men in peace with God!

This leads us to a second circumstance implied in the peace here announced; that is, peace among men, in the exercise of that worship, of which God is the only proper object. In the heathen world, nation had been separated from nation, through all ages, by the diversity and opposition of their religious rites, and the objects of their devotion. Hence in their

their contests, not only men were considered as at war with men, but gods with gods. Between all of them and the Jews, this diversity was the source of mutual contempt and enmity, from an abuse of the precepts, by which the seed of Abraham were enjoined to avoid intercourse with them, " lest they should be corrupted by their example." Every heathen was prohibited from their society, till he became a convert to their religion; and even then, he was not admitted to a fullness of communion. He could neither hold an office in their temple, nor be admitted into its inner court. Circumcision, the seal of the Abrahamic covenant, was a never-failing source of enmity and reproach. Without submission to it, no heathen could be admitted into religious communion.

This mark of distinction, though necessary for a time, yet invidious from its abuse, was abolished by Christ; and Jew and Gentile united by his gospel, in community of religious rights, equality of privilege, and the bonds of peace. The view of this reconciliation given by the apostle Paul, in opposition to the Judaizing teachers, who argued for the continuance of Mosaical distinctions, is equally just and elegant. The quotation is long, but should not be overlooked. " Remember," saith he to the converts from the Heathen at Ephesus—" Remember that *ye*, formerly Gentiles in the flesh, called

called uncircumcision, by that which is called circumcision in the flesh, made by hands, were at that time without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenant of promise; having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus, ye who were formerly afar off, have been made nigh, by the blood of Christ. For he is *our peace*, who hath made both *one*, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us, having abolished in his flesh, the *enmity, the law of commandments, in ordinances*, to make in himself of *twain*, *one* new man—making peace; and that he might reconcile *both* unto God, in *one* body, by the cross, having slain the *enmity* thereby; and came and preached *peace* to you, who were afar off, and to them who were nigh. For through him, we have both access to the father by one spirit. Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God."

Important as these two particulars are, there is a third of equal, if not superior importance, implied in "the peace" which was sung by angels in the fields of Bethlehem—I say, *superior importance*; as, without *it*, neither peace with God, nor harmony in his worship, can be enjoyed or subsist. That is, peace among the

the individuals, neighbourhoods, and nations of men, founded on mutual and universal good-will.

God is the common father of the universe: the nations of men are his family on earth; and consequently, connected by the relation of brethren. To him, therefore, they can never unite in the devotion of children, while their hearts are alienated from each other by envy, enmity, and strife. Nay, while they are strangers to that mutual good-will, which is the parent of peace among men, they must be incapable of that love of God, which is essential to his worship. This seems to be the meaning of the apostle John: If any man say, I love God, and hate his brother, he is a liar; for he who loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen! He who loveth not, knoweth not God; but he who dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him." On this principle, that love and peace among men are essential to peace and acceptance with God, our Saviour appears to have founded the following precept. "If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there remember that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way: first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." Thus it is, that

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as the seeds of peace are sown in the doctrines of Jesus, the services of his religion are its restoratives and guardians among men.

That this peace is one great object of Messiah's appearance is further evident, not only from the warmth with which that love is inculcated, from which it springs; and the declarations, that "love is the end of the commandment," and "fulfilling of the law; but from the practice and instructions of Christ himself, and the instructions of his apostles to all the churches. "Peace be to this house," was the introductory salutation, with which he sent his disciples to all the families of Israel. "Have peace one with another," was his instruction to themselves; and "peace be unto you," the words in which he addressed them after his resurrection. The declarations of the apostle are: "God hath called us to peace. The fruit of the spirit is love and peace: and the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the holy spirit." Hence arise the precepts which they inculcate: "Let the peace of God rule in your hearts: keep the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace: seek peace, and ensue it; and, as much as in you lieth, live peaceably with all men."

These, and a thousand other passages, clearly shew, that the spirit of christianity is a spirit of peace.

peace. And the last plainly demonstrates, that "the way of peace," into which its author came to lead us, extends to "the ends of the earth," and that the good-will from which it springs, embraces the whole family of men: that it should not be limited by country, climate, or complexion—by modes of religion, or forms of government: and that the political fiction of a natural enmity between any nations or societies of men, is blasphemy against nature, and nature's king. This is admirably illustrated by the example of the benevolent Jesus. The compassion of his heart, and the bounty of his healing hand, were as ready for a Samararitan, who worshipped the calves of Jeroboam, or a Roman centurion who adored the dæmons of the nations, as the poor and afflicted of the house of Israel. And in his commission to the apostles, he sent to all, with the tidings of salvation, the doctrine of peace.

Nor are we left to suppose, that the blessings of peace, and obligations to pursue it, are confined to men as individuals. Nations are represented in the glowing language of prophecy, as objects of Messiah's peace, and actuated by its spirit. Thus saith Isaiah: "He shall judge among the nations, and rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plough-shares, and their spears into pruning

ing-hooks: Nation shall not lift up sword against nation; neither shall they learn war any more."

The effects of this happy revolution, when wars shall cease, and the sword of violence be sheathed for ever—When the savage tyrant shall lay aside his ferocity, the timid slave be raised to the dignity and privileges of man, and the sweets of social intercourse enjoyed by all, in security and repose, are elegantly painted in another passage, by the hand of the same master. "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion, and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

What a delightful scene is here exhibited, in the glowing language of prophetic ardor, as characterizing Messiah's reign! A scene, where under the bold and expressive figures of the ravening wolf dwelling with the lamb, around whose

whose fold he had prowled for prey; and the *panther, ferocious tyrant of the mountain,* lying down with the kid—the lion, *savage monarch of the hill,* eating straw with the ox, and herding with the calf and the fatling—and the *bear of the rock, forgetting his ferocity and growling,* feeding with the cow—we are taught to look forward to a period, when rapine shall cease, oppression be no more, violence unheard of, and confidence, harmony, and peace, established among the nations—And when the hand of the assassin, and the envenomed tongue of the secret slanderer, aptly represented by the adder lurking in his den, shall not dare to wound even the sucking child!

Thus have I endeavoured to point out the extent and importance of the peace on earth, of which Messiah was the messenger and the fountain. I have shewn, from the indisputable testimony of the bible, that it implies reconciliation to God, as the only object of religious worship; union among men, in the enjoyment of religious rights, equality of religious privilege, and the bonds of love; and the establishment of goodwill, harmony. and peace among all the individuals, families, neighbourhoods, and nations of the world we inhabit.

From these circumstances, taken together, I trust it is evident, that the prospect opened by the birth of Messiah, was sufficient to inspire Angels with admiration and joy, warm the hearts of men with gratitude, and unite them by goodwill.

But while we rejoice in the prospect, and admit the solidity of the principles, on which angels sung; we must feel astonishment and regret, that a prospect so pleasing has never been fully realized.

It is true, for upwards of three hundred years after the publication of the gospel, the mutual affection of christians, and the peaceableness of their demeanour, were subjects of wonder, even to their enemies. But no sooner was their religion connected with the politics of kingdoms, and the intrigues of statesmen; and their priests seated among *nobles*, and ranked with the princes of the earth; than the bond of union was broken, the mild spirit of religion swallowed up by ambition, and the light of the gospel converted into a firebrand of discord. That the passions of individuals had introduced personal disputes, before this period, the apostles inform us; but that these ever affected the public harmony, we have no reason to believe. However, from the days of Constantine, in which the honors and emoluments of the state were

were connected with party or office in the religion of Jesus, down to the present, peace has been interrupted in the christian world; and the lust of power, riches, and pleasure has been stronger, not only than the obligations of religion, but the ties of nature. Of this, the history of fourteen hundred years is a continued testimony; and the present moment is an unhappy demonstration. In all the religious contests which have distracted nations, and terminated so often in scenes of blood, *the religion of the state*, and not the religion of Jesus, has been the subject, and the love of power, preeminence, or riches, the leading principle. And whatever party prevailed, sufficient care was taken to humble the vanquished, sink them into insignificance, and brand them with infamy. Nor can we attribute this spirit, *exclusively*, to any church, sect, or party. It has uniformly diffused itself *through* all, and operated *in* all. Of this, the lands of our nativity have afforded melancholy, but undeniable examples. During the reigns of the Stuart family, all parties were favoured in turn; and as power changed sides, catholic burned protestant, protestant persecuted catholic, and the presbyterians in their momentary triumph, denied toleration to both. In later periods, we see the same scenes acted in all their parts. We see Scottish presbyterians proscribe episcopacy; English episcopalians exclude presbyterians

rians from the honors and offices of the state; and a scion of the same stock, transplanted to Ireland, shedding its baneful influence over the presbyterians, who first gave that stability to its root, which has clothed its branches with fruits of gold. And, over all, we see the devoted Catholics bound down with the twisted chains of mental darkness, and corporal incapacity, by a body of laws, which humanity views with horror, justice reprobates, and religion pronounces *accursed.*

Blessed Jesus! are these the fruits of that peace on earth—that goodwill among men—the seeds of which thou camest to sow? *No!!!* They have sprung up in thy field, from the tares which the enemy sowed, in the night of darkness, while men slept. Thanks be to God! that darkness is no more; and men have awaked from the sleep of torpid indolence. The dawn of knowledge opens upon their understanding, and their hearts are warmed by its enlivening rays. The poisonous plants are already known by their fruits, and ere the day reaches its meridian brightness, they shall be plucked up by the roots, bound up in bundles and cast into the fire. Then, and not till then, will the prophecies of God, and the prospects of angels, be realized among us—Then will jealousies cease, discontents vanish, animosities be extinguished, and the pure spirit of the gospel, unadulterated

unadulterated by the politics of the world, warm us into mutual kindness, restore us to confidence, and soothe us into peace.

The same causes, which have rendered the *peace of the gospel* an empty name and banished it from among christians, have hitherto prevented the *extension of the gospel* to the other nations of the world. The covetousness, rapacity, cruelty, and violence of the professors of christianity, have universally caused the name of God to be blasphemed among the heathen, and the religion of Messiah to be rejected. Of this we have many instances in the conquest of America by the Spaniards; and it is not improbable, that succeeding generations will be informed of the like barbarities, practised by our own countrymen, in the east; though few of them have been yet published among us. These enormities, while they strike us with horror, and cover humanity with a blush, enable us to assign a reason, why the knowledge of the Lord hath not yet overflowed the earth, as the waters cover the sea: and at the same time convince us, that the peace of the gospel can never prevail among men, till the passions, the political interests, and the domineering spirit of religious party, be swallowed up in the ocean of universal goodwill.

If prospects may be trusted, that blissful period is at hand, even at the door. One great and enlightened nation has burst the chains of prejudice and slavery, disclaimed the idea of conquest for dominion, opened the temple of liberty for all religious denominations at home, and sent forth her arms, *not to destroy*, but *restore* the liberty of the world, and extend her blessings to all who dare, and by daring, deserve to be free. Tyrants already tremble at her name; while oppressed nations exult in her success, receive her sons with gratitude and joy, and unite in her cause. Happy! thrice happy the people, whose rulers may become wise, by the lesson which she has been obliged to write in letters of blood—Where the ear of the prince may be open to the voice of humanity reciting her grievances, and supplicating redress; and the necessity and horrors of revolution precluded, by *seasonable* and *radical* reform! That this may be our case is the prayer of my heart. That national "justice may roll down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream"—that civil pains and penalties, on account of religion, may be abolished for ever—and that *equal liberty—equal privilege*, and *equal protection*, may henceforth, be the portion of *all* the people; unite them in the bonds of inviolable brotherhood; and *perpetuate their attachment to their king and constitution*, by a community of interest in the peace and prosperity of their country!

From

From the views which have been given, of the peace to be introduced by the gospel, and the causes which have hitherto prevented its establishment and extension, the improvement to which it leads is plain and obvious.

That peace on earth; that is, among all the members of the great family of men, who inhabit it, is an end of the gospel, we have clearly seen. And that it affords the means, and enforces the duty of obtaining and preserving it, in the principles which it prescribes, and the motives it supplies, we cannot deny. We have seen also, that this peace has been prevented or destroyed, by the inordinate passions, and unjustifiable practices, both of individuals and nations, through every age, and in every country. With regard to the whole, the enquiry of the apostle James, and the answer which accompanies it, may be justly applied: "Whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your lusts. Ye lust, and have not; ye kill and desire to have; ye fight and war, yet ye cannot obtain."

If this be founded in truth, and supported by experience; and if the peace of the gospel be an object of desire, these lusts should be restrained, in order to attain it. If the covetousness, ambition, cruelty, and haughtiness of men, have been the parents of strife, oppression, bloodshed, confusion, and every evil work,

in families, neighbourhoods, and nations, let these be rooted out, and moderation, justice, and humility, planted in their stead, and peace, with all her blessings, will immediately follow. The native offspring of the gospel are, patience, forbearance, gentleness, goodness, and temperance, and her genuine fruits, peace and joy.

Hence, then, an obvious improvement of the subject before us. As christians, as men, and members of the state, we should mortify and subdue our selfish, turbulent, and ambitious passions—We should restrain the malevolence of our tongues, and withdraw our hands from secret fraud and open violence—we should retract every falsehood we have uttered, make reparation for the injuries we have done, and candidly acknowledge the offences we have committed against our brethren, that they may return to us, in the spirit of forgiving meekness, and restore us to their confidence, esteem, and love. In like manner, in whatever we have been injured or offended, so soon as our offending brother shall make reasonable reparation for the evil he hath done us, or becoming acknowledgment of his offence, we should cordially receive him with the arms of forgiveness—We should immediately " put away all bitterness and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking, with all malice; and be kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven us,"

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A second improvement of this subject, of no small importance, arises from a melancholy circumstance, which the wise and good have long observed, and deeply regretted: that is, violations of friendship, and disturbance of peace between individuals, families, and neighbourhoods, without injury or offence, actual or intended, on the part of either. This arises from attention to an order of beings, in the form of men, called in scripture, "busy-bodies, tattlers, or tale-bearers. They are to the mind of man, nearly the same as vermin to the bodies of brutes, which, at first *tickle*, but in the end, *teaze* and *torment*." It has been observed also, that the greater animals are chiefly infested by vermin; and that the leanest and feeblest have the greater number. The same is observable among men. The great are perpetually haunted by tale-bearers; and if one can be found of a feeble understanding, and meagre brain, they cluster round him, and tickle his ears with encomium on his own importance, till they gain admittance. Hence, they may be justly compared to a noxious insect, which is said to enter the ear of the rein-deer, eat its way into the brain, and produce madness. These tattlers are generally animals of little judgment, and less goodness; but of considerable cunning, and unbounded malice. They can pervert what they hear, misrepresent what they see, and call up a creation of falsehood, on occasion, to serve a turn. So early as the days of Moses, their

character seems to have been well known, and their occupation so odious, that it was strictly forbidden to the people of Israel. "Thou shalt not go up and down as a tale-bearer; neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbour." They appear, likewise to have crept in, very early, among the first christians. The apostle Paul describes them as worthless vagabonds, "idle, wandering about from house to house, and speaking things they ought not." And Peter classes them with "thieves and murderers." Even now, we have reason to believe, that some such there are. The jealousies, strifes, and enmities, which so frequently separate friend from friend, neighbour from neighbour, and family from family; and inflame larger societies with mutual jealousies, apprehension, and animosities, clearly prove it; if we can believe the testimony of the wise Solomon. "Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out, so, where there is no tale-bearer, strife ceaseth. But as coals are to burning coals, an wood to wood; so is a malicious man to kindle discord. The words of a tale-bearer are as wounds; they go down into the chambers of the body. For a froward man soweth strife, and a whisperer separateth chief friends."

From this circumstance the improvment is obvious. If we value the peace, which we have been considering, as we ought; and from a sense of its importance, wish to preserve it—I for this purpose,

purpose, we are willing to acknowledge the offences we have committed, and repair the injuries we have done; and in order to secure it, keep a watch upon our hands, our hearts, and our tongues, in all time to come; should we not likewise, shut our ears against the poison of the slanderer, the malicious whisperer's artful tale, the base insinuations of the cringing sycophant, and the false representations of the officious partizan? Reason says, "it is right"—Prudence says, "it is our interest"—Religion says, "it is our duty"—and experience proclaims, with ten thousand tongues, that "if we do not, jealousies, discord, and strife will reign for ever—that Heaven-born peace will be eternally banished from the society, and soothing comfort from the hearts of men."

Let us then, be determined to obey their united voice. Let us no longer listen to the tale of malice, or of art, which tends to deceive, to irritate, and inflame; and by representing men as enemies to each other, to convert them into such. For if this be our duty, where the misrepresentation extends, only to an individual, or a family; it is, if possible, *more than duty*, where it goes to calumniate and vilify, not only a neighbourhood, but a nation; by calumny and falsehood, to revive and inflame mutual prejudice, jealousy, and contention; and, under their influence, to perpetuate oppression, slavery, and wretchedness.

Such

Such are the slanders, now and lately circulated among you, against which your ears should be shut, and your hearts double-fortified. The subject of these are the Roman Catholics of Ireland—*three fourths of its inhabitants.* Ye are told by malicious and designing men, that they are not only "*ignorant,*" but "*incapable of liberty.*"

The latter part of this assertion, is a *libel* on *human nature,* and *blasphemy against God !* The wretch must be equally lost to religion and shame, who dares assert that God is so weak, or so wicked, as to form a nation of men, insensible to the first right of humanity, and incapable of enjoying it. Nor is the former part of the assertion less false, than the latter is impious. That there should be ignorant catholics is not wonderful, when we consider that they have been so long shut out from the means of knowledge, by the laws of their country. The higher ranks have been excluded from the benefits of our university, unless they renounced their religion; and what inducement could the man of lower station have to enter on the pursuit of knowledge, while the laws of the land forbad him to look up to the honor of a private tuition, or even subordinate station in a public school ? Yet, under all these discouragements, the catholics have refuted the charge of ignorance, and proved its falshood. Nay, they have lately exhibited specimens of knowledge, learning,

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and liberality, on reviewing which, their *accomplished* and *capable* calumniators should blush, and hide their heads.

However, my friends, this charge of *Catholic ignorance* and *incapacity* is only for *your* ears. The same lips convey to them a different tale. They are told, with great affection and regret, "that their abilities and their merits are well known; and that they ought to share the benefits of the constitution in common with their brethren; but that such is the ignorance, bigotry, and illiberality of a great majority of the protestants, that nothing can be done for the catholics, without offending *them*."

Now, who constitute this great majority of protestants, meant by them, not only in Ulster, but in Ireland? *Presbyterians!* Are ye presbyterians then, such *ignorant bigotted*, and *illiberal wretches*, as those double-tongued tattlers, first attempt to *make*, and afterwards *represent* you? With you it lies, either to justify or refute the charge. And be assured, such charge lies against you. I speak not on the authority of idle rumor. It has been made in my own hearing, again and again.

As the tale I have mentioned, is addressed to your folly, I shall now take notice of one addressed to your fears. Ye are told, that "the catholics are combining against you, meditating the overthrow of our happy constitution, and preparing to embroil the nation in war."

This

This is as false as any part of the former. Notwithstanding the sage prognostications of our wise masters, all their proceedings are legal, orderly, and peaceful. And at this moment, they are supplicating—humbly and dutifully supplicating—his Majesty, for a redress of their grievances, and a share in the blessings of the constitution, which would bind them to their country, by interest as well as affection; and they are looking, with imploring eye, for your intercessory voice in support of their prayer, which would unite them to *you* by ties of gratitude.

There is yet another suggestion, founded on, and addressed to, your jealousies and your interests. That is, "that the restoration of *their* rights and liberty would abridge or destroy *yours*."

This is absurdity too gross for any thing above idiotism, or childhood, to swallow. Are your fields less fruitful, or your harvests less abundant, because those of your catholic brethren share the benefits of the enlivening sun, refreshing showers, and dews of Heaven, in common with them? No! Nor would your liberties be injured, if slavery were banished from the earth; and, not only your catholic brethren, but the whole human race, as free as ye are---or, *injustice ought to be*. Liberty, like the light of Heaven, though extended to infinity, is not diminished

nished in its influence. No individual is deprived of its blessings, though ten thousand times ten thousand share them with him. He who tells you the contrary, may as well tell you, that "if the sun shine on catholics, ye must pine in darkness;" or, "if the heathen be given Christ for a possession, ye must become outcasts from the family of God."

These are only a few of the political forgeries of the busy-body and slanderer, at this eventful moment. But they are such glaring instances of the baseness of his heart, and the venom of his tongue, that they could not be overlooked; especially in a case so nearly connected with your honor and your interest. And from their direct tendency to create alarm, jealousy, and distrust in the hearts of man, and consequently, weaken the confidence, endanger the peace, and destroy the comfort of society, I hope they will be sufficient to enforce the necessity of shutting your ears against every malicious tattler, and treating him and his fictions, with the contempt they deserve.

I meant to have mentioned some farther improvement of the subject before us; but, as I fear I have already trespassed on your patience, I shall omit it for the present.

I shall, however, take the liberty of adding, that I have been thus diffuse, from the full conviction, that all I have said is implied in the sub-

ject before us---A subject, as important as ever employed the song of angel, or the tongue of man. And I have applied it to our present situation, because I am convinced it is my duty, when the ear of the ignorant and the simple is poisoned by falsehood, and their hearts envenomed by malicious insinuations---When the oppressed catholic is inflamed against the presbyterian, as the enemy of his rights, and opposer of his claims; and the credulous presbyterian is made to fear that his throat is about to be cut by the harmless catholic, with whom he has lived in the habits of intimacy and goodwill, from his earliest infancy—when the public confidence is actually destroyed, by the groundless outcry, "that the public peace is in danger."

But believe me, my brethren, the public peace, and the *public purse*, are in more danger from those who originate such alarms, than from *all the catholics in the kingdom put together*. Who are they?—I will tell you, in few words, who they are.—They are the official heirs and successors of the very men, who, *less than ninety years ago*, represented to queen Anne, that your forefathers were enemies to her government, and a dead weight on *their interests*; that allowing them the rights of men, and the benefits of the constitution, would destroy both church and state; and who procured, by their outrageous clamour, the continuance of the infamous test-act, which excluded the presbyterians from every

every trust, honor, and office of the state, above that of a petty constable. At that period, every calumny was levelled against them which is now pointed at the catholics; and every alarm sounded, which now disturbs the public mind. And all this was done by a faction, which now arrogates the *lofty* title of *ascendency* —by the placemen and pensioners of the day— by corrupt corporations, and a numerous body, whose office is so venerable, and name so sacred, that it would be deemed impiety to mention them; with a venal train of sycophants and expectants, gaping for the spoils of the public.

Let me now ask you; were the representations of these men founded in truth?—Ye know they were not! And I now tell you, that the reports so industriously circulated, of danger from the catholics, with which the weak and the ignorant are alarmed and terrified, are equally false. They are worse than false—they are insidious! They are circulated, not only with a view to inflame your minds against your brethren, but to divert you from seeking—humbly and constitutionally seeking—that reform of government, which would deprive their authors of the spoils of oppression; but would raise your country to prosperity and happiness!--- A reform, without which the catholics must continue slaves in their native land; and ye--- *even the proudest among you*---have nothing left

to boast of, but the exclusive honor of being *driven to market once in seven years*, and having your honor, your understanding, your conscience, and your allegiance to your country, which ought to be sacred, publickly disposed of, by your lordly masters: while your drivers are goaded on by some more powerful dependent on a foreign influence, which, behind the curtain of state, manages the springs of your political puppet-show.

To accomplish this, national jealousy, distrust and division are absolutely necessary: and all these rumours are forged and circulated to excite and diffuse them. Treat such, therefore, with contempt. Let them not blind your understanding, bias your judgment, or corrupt your hearts, so as to inflame you against brethren, who desire to be united with you, in order to swell that voice, with which ye may demand your long violated rights and liberties. Union is, not only the bond of peace, but the foundation of power, prosperity, and happiness: and union can have no place between the persecutor and the persecuted, the oppressor and the oppressed, the tyrant and the slave. Let these distinctions then be done away; and the evils of which we complain will vanish with them. Say ye, with the firm, but respectful tone of free-born subjects, "they *should* be done away, and the blessings of government extended to all with equal hand." This, as I hope to prove

on

on a future occasion, it is my duty to inculcate, and yours to do. At present I shall only mention, that the relief to which it points, is the will of God; and, as we have devoted this day to religion, that it alone can render the services of religion acceptable to him. "Is not this the fast that I have chosen," saith the Lord, "to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burthens, to let the oppressed go free, and break every yoke? If thou put away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity: then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily; and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall gather thee up. Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer: Thou shalt cry, and he will say, here I am."

Let these bands of wickedness then be broken, which bind down our catholic brethren to contempt, slavery, and wretchedness—Let their heavy burthens be undone, and their yoke broken: then shall the light of our prosperity break forth as the morning; the blessing of God shall unite us as brethren; and we will have cause, as far as *our* country is concerned, to celebrate the accomplishment of that happy revolution, which angels sung, in prospect only: "Glory to God, among the highest—on earth peace—goodwill among men."

Preached

Preached to the presbyterian congregation of Portaferry, December 25, 1792.

N. B. The specimens of reports, &c. which this sermon presents, afford sufficient evidence of the vileness, villainy, and cruelty, of the alarmists of the day; and the consequent danger of interfering with them. Yet these reports are but a specimen of the least alarming and dangerous rumors. On several occasions, the presbyterians and catholics were alternately terrified with the apprehension of being murthered, in their beds, by each other, to such a degree that many spent sleepless nights in the fields. Written papers, of the most atrocious tendency, were also pasted on the doors, or thrown into the yards of chapels and meeting-houses, on nights between Saturday and Sunday. One of these, found in the chapel-yard, near Portaferry, about this time, and traced to an origin, *not catholic*, I have in my possession, of which the following is a correct copy.

TO

TO THE CATHOLICS

OF THE

BARONY OF ARDS.

Gentlemen,

I have been for these some years a most attentive observer of the opinions and actions of the protestants of this our kingdom towards us, and I think I am a perfect master of our history—for these reasons I take the liberty of offering my advice to you, and I can with truth assert it is the advice of a man whose forefathers bled most freely in our cause; and although I have lost by the fate of war, their large estates, yet I have not lost the feelings of their hearts or their attachment to our holy religion—the advice I intend to give you will be short, but before I give it I will make some observations to you, the truth of which I defy any man to deny; How comes it that the Presbyterians are so fond of us now, or rather appear to be so fond of us—because they want to betray us—king George the third, whom God Almighty bless, has been to us the best friend that ever sat on the throne of England, and these rotten hearted Presbyterians want us to join them and assist in ruining him our best friend—I beg of you to look at the ruins of our forts and castles in every part of the country that they deluged with the blood of our forefathers, I beg of you to remember how they used their king and us when they were in power.

Remember

Remember the horrid murders of Island Magee, where these blood thirsty Presbyterians spared neither man, woman, or child, and then think on their impudence to come and insult us with offers of friendship---can there be a man amongst us so foolish as to be duped by such offers, can there be a man amongst us so forgetful of his religion as to accept of them? if there is, I beg of him to take one steady look at that hypocritical villain Dixon, and if the blood of a true Catholic runs in his veins, his heart will instantly tell him, that such another black mouthed Presbyterian was the murderer of his grandfather, and instead of friendship with a villain let revenge be the grand object of your life: we have now a double reason for revenge, first to revenge our king that they want us to assist them in destroying, who has been always our best friend, for which reason they hate him, and secondly to revenge ourselves on the only sect of Protestants that have ever been our real enemies,—some amongst you may not be acquainted with history, but all of you must have heard of or felt the cruelties of the Break of day boys, who were they—they were rank Presbyterians; when our defenders stood forth and protected us, they (Presbyterians) fled and durst not meet us in the field—now when they dare not meet us as Break of day boys---they come like the hypocritical Dixon, the black hearted Cochran, the smooth insidious Sinclare, or that double faced mountebank Porter, to offer us their friendship. Heavens! are we so lost to every honourable feeling as to have any

kind

kind of friendship with a set of people who murder'd our forefathers and destroyed our fortunes. ---A few indeed have saved their property by turning to the church of England, but the difference between that church and ours is so little, that I forgive them, as I am sure all the church of England must be our friends, and I am sure they must be the enemies of the Presbyterians; for these black hearted villains would destroy both the churches of Rome and England if they could---I therefore my brothers advise you to stand true to king George the third, and our younger brothers of the church of England; if you do not the Presbyterians will do the same here they have done in France, murder our good king, his friends, and all the Catholics, destroy our Priests, chapels and altars, and totally overset our holy religion --by standing true to the king we will be safe, we will get all we want, and be a happy people; this is my advice and I implore the Almighty to turn your hearts against the Presbyterians our pretended friends but real enemies.

DOWN. *A TRUE DEFENDER.*

SERMON III.

TIM. II. 3. 16. 17. *All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*

THAT all scripture was given by inspiration of God, we firmly believe. That it became necessary, from the degeneracy of man into ignorance, error, and sin; that its design was to teach, reprove, correct, and instruct him in righteousness; and that it contains a perfect system of precepts, the observance of which would secure his happiness here, and lead him to happiness hereafter, we cannot deny.

In these particulars the christian world is nearly agreed: and protestants have universally pleaded for, and supported, the principle, "that the bible is the only infallible rule, both of faith and practice."

This principle necessarily implies, that the doctrines and precepts of the bible extend to, and comprehend, every part of human duty, and

and every relation from which it arises; and consequently, that its principles, reproofs, and instructions, should be applied for the correction of every error, and every sin, which may lead *man* astray, or impair that happiness, to which wisdom is the guide, and of which virtue is the parent, and religion the guardian.

This is so plain, that it cannot be disputed; and from it another consequence directly follows. This is, that the more enormous any sin is in itself, destructive in its tendency, or extensive in its effects, the more it ought to be exposed by the doctrines, and checked by the reproofs and corrections, of religion.

In these principles and consequences, considered as abstract propositions, we are all agreed. Yet such is the perverseness of man---such the partial attachment of every individual to his own prejudices, passions, and pursuits, that he thinks they should be exempted from an universal law, and the denunciations of religion levelled against these sins only, from which he is free.

This partiality, if indulged, would put an end to all reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness; reduce the Scriptures, though given by inspiration, to an empty name; and leave iniquity to range without restraint. Nay! it would leave the sovereignty of God, over

the conscience and conduct of men, without an advocate, and remove all opposition to the increase and perpetuity of satan's kingdom. For so far as iniquity, of any kind, is suffered to pass unnoticed, unreproved, and uncorrected---so far is the end of revelation defeated, the cause of Heaven abandoned, and the usurpations of satan, not only tolerated, but encouraged.

Hence, it is the duty of the Ministers of religion, as watchmen of souls, stewards of the manifold grace of God, and guardians of truth and righteousness, to observe errors and iniquities, as they rise; to expose them in their destructive tendencies; to display their enormity and guilt; and to reprove and correct them with freedom and boldness. The commissions to the prophets are one continued proof of this; and the language of the apostle Paul is, "preach the word; be instant, in season, out of season, exhort and reprove, with long-suffering and doctrine; and rebuke with all authority."

That this preaching, exhortation, and reproof should extend to every sin, and every transgression of the law of God, cannot be denied. And that no rank, order, or office of men, is exempted from, or placed above, them, I shall afterwards prove, not by doubtful disputations, but the decisive testimony of the word of God, and the facts it recites.

To

To an attentive mind it must appear surprizing, that such proof should be necessary; as the very supposition, that any man is above the reproof and correction of religion, or any action beyond their reach, implies, that such man is above the authority of God, and such action beyond the controul of his law. Yet, that such proof is necessary, we cannot doubt, while the interference of religion and its ministers is boldly condemned, in the most important concerns, not only of life, but of truth and justice. These are, where the duties of men, united in society, and placed in the relations of *governors* and *governed*, *magistrates* and *people*, come under consideration. Though all allow that the personal duties of temperance, sobriety, and chastity—that mutual love, fidelity, and order in families—and even justice, truth, moderation, friendship, charity, and peace, in a town or neighbourhood, should be recommended and enforced, under the sanctions of religion; and every violation of them exposed, reproved, and execrated, with all the terrors of damnation, though their effects are confined to individuals, or extend only to a few families; yet, when power is abused by governors, and those who act under them, to the purposes of partiality, oppression, rapine, corruption, and violence, till whole nations are distracted, plundered, and enslaved; and every right of man presumptuously trampled under foot; the abettors of slavery and corruption maintain, that religion should stand

stand by, as an idle spectator; and that all her exhortations, reproofs, and instructions in righteousness, should be buried in slavish silence. In other words, that religion and her ministers have no concern, either with the duties or interests of men, as members of a state; nor any right to interfere with the conduct of rulers, and the affairs of nations.

Groundless and absurd as this position is, when applied to that religion, of which God is the author, and the Bible the statute-book; it must be admitted, as resting on something *like* solidity, in respect to political religious establishments, created, protected, and supported by states. Of these, kings are the head, policy the only principle, and political influence the end. For such, therefore, to claim authority over rulers; or their ministers to expose, reprove, or correct, the corruptions, usurpations, or profligacy, of governments, would be unpardonable presumption, and political blasphemy. Shall the creature say to the Creator, "I have power over thee; thy ways are evil, and thy doings unjust?" No, surely! or shall the priests and the levites, who minister in the tabernacle of the state, and *wax* fat on the sacrifices of the people's substance around its altars, lift up their voice against the oppressions, which raise them to seats among the princes of the land? This never *has* been the case—nor can it ever be supposed possible, till *principle become stronger*

than

than policy, and religion be rescued from the mean drudgery of a political engine. Till this period shall arrive, the voice of the priesthood will be the echo of the prince—his will their religion—his power the object of their slavish veneration—and the measures of government will be the standard of devotion. The father of mercies will be solicited, *in prescribed forms,* to become partner with the oppressor, the plunderer, and the assassin, of nations; and when iniquity, rapine, and bloodshed prosper, Heaven's lofty arch will resound with *impious* thanksgivings, and *blasphemous* praise.

All this is natural and consistent. As admirers of consistency in others, let us, therefore, examine the religion, *not of the state, but of the bible,* that we may see what *it* teaches, and what consistency requires of *us* who *profess* to believe it.

That *it* considers all men, *and of every rank,* as subject to its controul—that it directs its precepts *to all*; and that it censures the violation of these *in all,* whether *princes, priests,* or *people,* I now *assert,* and shall endeavour to prove, not by doubtful disputation, but as already mentioned, by the *decisive testimony of the word of God, and the facts which it recites.*

The first fact to be adduced is so extensive that it could not be compressed into the bounds of

of a sermon. That is, that the great body of the Bible is almost entirely *political.* Of this, the prophetic writings, from beginning to end, are one continued testimony. They scarcely contain a single exhortation, precept, promise, or threat, addressed to men, as individuals, or members of a family; but as *states,* or *nations.* And, whenever they descend to particulars, it is to denounce the tyranny of kings, the corruption of governments, and the *unprincipled* connivance and rapacity of priests and prophets. This is so plain, that any man who has read them, *if not more than half asleep,* could not avoid seeing it. To them, therefore, *who can read,* I seriously recommend them. And if my recommendation be attended to, I am sure the profit will more than repay the trouble; and the fact, which I have mentioned, will appear undeniable.

The next fact is, "that the bible interferes with affairs of government, by the precepts which it gives for directing the conduct both of magistrates and people, governors and governed, in the discharge of their political duties.

In proving this fact, I shall present you only with the language of the Bible; after one very short observation respecting a custom, in it alluded to.

In early stages of society, magistrates are generally denominated, "the elders, or ancients of

of the people;" because, before writing became general, and regular forms of education were introduced, old men, whose wisdom was matured by experience, universally acted in that important character. And, that justice might be speedily administered in every city, which was, in itself a distinct state, they sat in the gates, from morning till night, to dispense it to all, who went out and came in. Hence every precept in the bible, commanding the "execution of judgment and justice in the gates," is to be considered, as *exclusively* directed to the governors and rulers of the people.

By this observation, ye are to examine and judge of the precepts and remarks which follow.

"Rob not the poor, because he is poor; neither oppress the afflicted *in the gate*. For the Lord will plead their cause, and *spoil the soul* of those who spoiled them. Take away the wicked from before the king, and his throne shall be established in righteousness. As a roaring lion, and a ranging bear, so is a wicked ruler over the poor people. The prince, who wanteth understanding, is also a great oppressor. The king, by righteousness, establisheth the land; but he, who receiveth gifts, overthroweth it. Scornful men bring a state into a snare; but wise men turn away wrath. If a ruler hearken to lies, all his servants will be wicked. The king, who *faithfully* judgeth the poor, his

 throne

throne shall be established for ever. Open thy mouth, and judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy. Judges and officers shalt thou make thee, in *all thy gates*, throughout thy tribes; and they shall judge the people with just judgment. Thou shalt not wrest judgment; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift. For a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous. That which is *altogether* just thou shalt follow, *that thou mayest live, and inherit the land*, which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

"Hear the word of the Lord, ye rulers! Give ear unto the law of the Lord, ye people! Learn to do well, seek judgment, relieve the oppressed. Execute *true* judgment, and shew mercy and compassion, *every man to his brother*, and oppress not the stranger, nor the poor, and let none of you *imagine evil in his heart against his brother*. Speak ye the truth, every man to his neighbour, and execute the judgment *of peace and truth* in your gates."

These are a few of the general instructions of the Bible, which shew that religion prescribes the duty of princes, as well as of the people. And from them we might safely conclude, that *her authority*, and *the duty of her teachers*, extend to both. However, we shall next see, that this conclusion does not rest on *general precepts and remarks*; but that the bible is prescribed *by God*

God himself, as the *standard* by which *kings* are to *rule*, and *princes govern*; and that it is the *duty* of the teachers of religion, where her *principles* are set aside, and her *precepts* violated, to "reprove, correct, and instruct in righteous-"ness."

The first part of this position requires only one passage to establish it immoveably. "When thou art come into the land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like as all the nations which are about me. It shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book, out of that which is before the priests the levites. And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life; that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them—That his *heart be not lifted up above his brethren*, and *that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand, or to the left*: to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom."

As this passage is perfectly decisive, and establishes beyond a doubt, the authority of the law of God over kings and governments; we shall now take notice of some others, which enjoin the teachers of religion to reprove and correct their departure from its principles of

eternal and immutable justice; and display the integrity, freedom and boldness with which they discharged their duty.

To this purpose, the commission given to Jeremiah is perfectly in point. "Gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee: Be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them. For, behold! I have made thee this day a defenced city, and an iron pillar and brazen walls, against the whole land, against the *kings* of Judah, against the *princes* thereof, against the *priests* thereof, and against the *people* of the land. And they shall fight against thee, but shall not prevail; for I am with thee, saith the Lord, to deliver thee."

The commission to Isaiah is perfectly similar: "Cry aloud, spare not; lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob (the rulers of the people) their sins."

Ezekiel was sent to Pharaoh, king of Egypt, with denunciations against his pride, oppression, and cruelty: And the following was his message to the rulers of Tyre: "Son of man, say unto the prince of Tyrus, thus saith the Lord God, because thine heart is lifted up, and thou hast said, I am a God, and set thine heart as the heart of God, and hast defiled thy sanctuaries

tuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities; therefore, I will bring forth a fire from the midst of thee: it shall devour thee: and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth, in sight of all them that behold thee."

The commissions of the other prophets are expressed in like terms, and uniformly point to the same objects: and the following passages, among a multitude, demonstrate the honesty and boldness, with which they discharged their duty.

"How is the faithful city became an harlot? Righteousness lodged in it, but now murderers: Thy princes are become rebellious, and companions of thieves: Every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards."

"As for my people, *children* are their oppressors, and *women* rule over them. O my people, they, *who lead thee, cause thee to err, and destroy the way* of thy paths. The Lord will enter into judgment with the *rulers* of his people, and the *princes* thereof: for ye have eaten up the vineyard; the *spoil of the poor* is in your houses. *What mean ye*, that ye *beat my people to pieces*, and *grind the faces of the poor?*"

"Wo unto them, who *decree unrighteous decrees*, and write *grievousness* which they have prescribed!

prescribed! *to turn aside the needy from judgment*, and to *take away the right from the poor of my people.*"

"Surely the princes are become foolish! the counsel of the *wise* counsellors of Pharaoh is become brutish!"

"Wherefore hear the word of the Lord, *ye scornful men*, who rule this people, which is in Jerusalem: because ye have said, we have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement: When the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us; for we have made *lies our refuge*; and *under falsehood have we hidden ourselves*. Therefore, thus saith the Lord, judgment will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet, and *the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies*, and the waters shall overflow the hiding-place. Your *covenant with death*, shall be *disannulled*, and your *agreement with hell shall not stand*. When the overflowing scourge shall pass through, *ye shall* be trodden down. For *this is a people robbed* and *spoiled: They are for a prey, and none saith, restore.*"

"Among my people are wicked men: they lay wait, as they who set snares—they set a trap—they *catch men*. As a cage is full of birds, so are their houses full of deceit: therefore, *they are become great and waxen rich. They are waxen*

waxen fat—they shine! Yea, they overpass the deeds of the wicked. They judge not the cause of the fatherless, yet they prosper; and the cause of the needy do they not judge. These are the men who *devise mischief,* and give *wicked counsel in the state.*"

"Behold the princes of Israel! every one within thee are set to shed blood. In the midst of thee have they dealt by oppression. In thee are men who carry tales to shed blood. In thee they have taken gifts; and thou hast greedily gained of thy neighbours by extortion. Thy princes are like wolves ravening for prey. The people of the land have used oppression, and exercised robbery; and have vexed the poor and needy."

"Hear this, O priests! Hearken, ye house of Israel! and give ear, O house of the king! *execute judgment in* the gates."

"Hear this, ye that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the earth fail. Woe to the bloody city! it is full of lies and robbery: the prey departeth not. The princes within her, are roaring lions: her judges are ravening wolves. Spoiling and violence are before me; and there are that *raise up strife and contention.* Therefore, the law is slacked, and judgment doth never go forth, for the wicked doth compass the righteous. The prince demandeth, and the judge asketh for reward; and the *great man*

man uttereth his *mischievous desire: so they wrap it up among them!* none calleth for justice, nor any pleadeth for truth. They trust in vanity, and speak lies. They conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity. The act of violence is in their hands. Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood. Their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity; wasting and destruction are in their paths. The way of peace they know not. Therefore is judgment far from us; neither doth justice overtake us. We wait for light, but behold, obscurity; for brightness, but we walk in darkness. We roar all like bears; and mourn sore like doves: We look for judgment, but there is none—for *deliverance*, but it is far from us. Judgment is turned away backwards, and justice standeth afar off; truth is fallen in the street, and *equity* cannot enter. Yea, *truth faileth;* and *he, who departeth from evil, is accounted mad.* And the Lord saw it; and it displeased him that there was *no judgment.*"

The scenes exhibited in these few passages, are equally affecting and instructive. They present us with a melancholy picture of the depravity of rulers, and the abuses of government: and at the same time, they clearly prove both the *right* and *duty* of the teachers of religion to reprove their tyranny, oppression, and cruelty; and display the integrity and boldness with which that duty was discharged.

Taking

Taking it for granted, that they are sufficient for these purposes, I shall now proceed one step further, and shew, that by virtue of their office, they are likewise to enforce the abolition of these oppressions, penalties and pains, which former governments have inflicted, and still continue in force.

"Touching the house of the king of Judah, say, hear ye the word of the Lord, O house of David; thus saith the Lord, execute judgment in the morning, remove your exactions from my people, and *deliver him that is spoiled out of the hands of the oppressor;* lest my fury go out like fire, and burn that none can quench it, *because of the evil of your doings.*"

"Thus saith the Lord, go down to the king of Judah and say; hear the word of the Lord, O king of Judah, *thou*, and *thy servants*, and *thy people*, execute judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor: do no wrong, nor violence, nor shed innocent blood."

These sayings were addressed, *not to the rulers only*, but to *the people* also; plainly shewing that they had a *right*, and that it was their *duty* to interfere in behalf of the oppressed; and on the hardest supposition, to *petition for their relief*. And as the indolence of the people, and the fear of incurring difficulties, frequent-

ly prevent their doing right, and induce them to plead ignorance, in excuse for their neglect, the following passage may be quoted with great propriety. " If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain: If thou say, behold! we knew it not: doth not he, who knoweth the heart, consider it: And he, who keepeth the soul, doth he not know it? And shall he not render to every one according to his deeds?"

The following examples extend farther still—they go to prove the interference of the teachers of religion, by the command of God, not only with the conduct of rulers in respect to the people; but the conduct of kings and kingdoms to each other.

Rehoboam, having raised an hundred and eighty thousand men, to make war against Jeroboam, to *whom* the ten tribes had revolted, was prevented by the interference of Shemaiah, a prophet.

Three years afterwards, Shishak, king of Egypt, marched against Jerusalem, with a prodigious army; and, as the sacred historian informs us, " because they had transgressed." Shemaiah again interposed, and *charged the king and princes with their iniquities;* on which they reformed, and Judah was saved from destruction.

Asa,

Asa, king of Judah, bribed Benhadad of Syria, to break a league with the king of Israel, for which Hanani, the Seer, severely rebuked him, and charged him with foolishness.

Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, *reproved* and *instructed* by Jehu, son of Hanani, visited his kingdom, reformed his government, and charged the judges of the land to avoid partiality and oppression. The principle on which he enforced the charge, deserves particular attention. "Take heed" says he, "what ye do; for ye judge, *not for man, but for the Lord, who is present in the judgment.*"

Eliezer reproved Jehoshaphat, for joining with Ahaziah, king of Israel, in an unjust war against Tarshish.

Amaziah, king of Judah, hired an hundred thousand mercenaries, for which he paid an hundred talents of silver, (about 36,000l.) to make war against the Edomites: but on the remonstrance of a prophet, he dismissed the sanguinary hirelings, and forfeited the money.

And when Israel, having prevailed over Judah in an oppressive war, took two hundred thousand women and children captives, and purposed to keep them in slavery; Oded, a prophet of the Lord, thus addressed them: "The Lord God of your fathers was wroth with Judah, and hath delivered them into your

hands; and now ye propose to keep under the children of Judah and Jerusalem, for *bond-men* and *bond-women* unto you. But are there not with *you*, *even with you*, sins against the Lord your God? Now, *hear me*, therefore, and *deliver up the captives again*, which ye have taken captive of your *brethren*; *for the fierce wrath of the Lord is upon you.*"

The princes immediately held a council, and in obedience to the united voice of religion and humanity, enforced the prophet's words. Their address to the army deserves to be engraven on every heart. "They said unto the people, ye shall not bring in the captives hither: for, whereas we have offended against the Lord already, ye intend to add to our sins and our trespass; for our trespass is great, and there is fierce wrath against Israel." Nor are the sensibility, religion, and generosity of the people less remarkable. They instantly sacrificed their ambition and their covetousness, at the shrine of humanity, truth, and justice. "They released the captives and the spoil, before the princes and all the congregation. And they rose up and took the captives, *and clothed all that were naked among them, and arrayed them, and shod them, and gave them to eat and to drink, and anointed them, and carried all the feeble of them upon asses, and brought them to Jericho, to their brethren! ! !*"

Glorious

Glorious men! blessed! ever blessed be your memory, and your example sacred! But blush, ye *pretended* disciples of a merciful Jesus, equally strangers to *its* influence, and the benign spirit of your exalted master! who rejoice in the slavery of your brethren, and glory in their debasement! Hide your heads, ye devoted minions of tyranny and oppression, who pledge your despicable lives, and your fortunes, to perpetuate corruption, and entail wretchedness on generations unborn!

But I forbear the reflections which the case suggests. Let us confine our attention to the fact which it goes to establish, in common with the others which I have quoted: that is, "that it is the office of religion, and its teachers, to expose, reprove, and correct, the partiality, oppression, and tyranny, of rulers; and even the *unprincipled combinations*, and *iniquitous transactions*, of kings with kings, and nations with nations."—A fact, not only founded on the law of God, but uniformly supported by the conduct of his inspired prophets—A fact so evident, from the passages produced, that he, who denies it, need not blush to deny, that light shines around him, or the earth supports his steps.

Religion, however, carries her authority still farther; and the conduct of the prophets will justify mankind in the exercise of it. As this will

will appear afterwards, I shall now consider two cavils which ignorance or perverseness may, perhaps, bring forward against me.

I have mentioned *the bible*, as the standard by which we were to ascertain, whether religion has a controul over the conduct of kings, and the measures of government.

Now, perhaps, it may be alleged that the law of Moses alone, as contained in the five books ascribed to him, is concerned in this question; this law being alluded to, as the standard in all the following books.

This law I shall readily admit as the *standard* by which governments were to be regulated. As such, it not only prescribes the rules of impartial juctice, moderation, and integrity, by which kings were to govern; but teaches, that the observance of these was *the condition*, on which they should be continued in power. For this is the evident meaning of the words; "that he may *prolong his days in his kingdom*."

This law, therefore, may be considered as a *fixed constitution*, by which government was to be framed and regulated, and rulers directed in the discharge of their duty. Hence, the judges and kings of Israel were enjoined to have a copy of it *continually* with them, "that they might keep all the words and statutes thereof,

to

to do them. And, as has been observed, the keeping and doing these was the condition on which their power was to be prolonged.

These statutes they frequently violated, by treachery, oppression, and cruelty: and the records of following times, specifying their crimes, and the steps taken by the prophets to correct and reform them, previous to their deposition, banishment, or death, shew the manner of procedure which ought to be adopted in all such cases. And the instances I have quoted, are so many *statutes on the case*, proposed as precedents *by divine authority*, for the imitation of all ages.

These records were, at different periods, committed to writing; and were collected by Ezra, after the return from the Babylonish captivity, about one thousand and fifty years after the giving of the law. From that time they were publicly adopted, as a *divine rule*. Our Saviour and his apostles, acknowledged, quoted, and appealed to them *as such*. *They* are the *scriptures*, all the parts of which the apostle Paul declares, in our text, "to be given by inspiration of God; and to be profitable, for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, *thoroughly* furnished unto all good works:" and of which he declares elsewhere,

where, " that the facts contained in them, were *our examples*," and written for *our admonition*, on whom the ends of the world are come."

Now, in what sense were they written for admonition ? or, in what manner can they be profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness, but by teaching us to avoid the evil forbidden and condemned; and to practise the good recommended, whether by precept or example ? None possible that I can discover ! !

Let me now ask you ; are not the passages, which I have quoted, part of these records which were written for our admonition ; and do they not contain part of these examples, which are holden out to us ? most assuredly.—And do not these *admonitions* and *examples* clearly shew, " that the interference of the teachers of religion, to reprove, correct, and denounce the injustice, fraud, and oppression of rulers, and the depravity and corruption of governments, is sanctioned by *the law of God*, and the uniform declarations and example of *all* the prophets ? and that *their* conduct is proposed to us, *as objects of imitation*, by Christ and his apostles ? No christian dare deny it.

Hence, then, I conclude, that not only the *right*, but the *duty* of the teachers of religion to expose, reprove, and correct *every action, and every*

every measure contrary to the *eternal principles* of truth and justice, rests on the broad basis of the bible.—Whether such actions, and such measures, be done and pursued, by *prince* or *people*, *governors* or *governed*, *states* or *individuals*.

The second cavil may be, "that the exhortations, reproofs, corrections, and instructions, in the passages I have quoted, were not pronounced by the ordinary teachers of religion; but by persons inspired, and sent, for the special purpose:" and therefore, "that the acts performed by them, came not within the office of *ordinary* religious teachers."

This I chearfully admit, in its full force, *so far as it states a fact*: but I deny the conclusion drawn from it, and hope *clearly* to refute it.

We have seen, that partiality, injustice, fraud, oppression, and cruelty, in rulers, were *strictly* forbidden by the law.—We know that the priests were the guardians and teachers of that law—Is it not evident then, that, *in the strictest* sense, the teaching, nay, the *very reading*, of it was a direct censure of these enormities?—But it is said, "the teachers did not censure them," I grant it! but the conclusion from this is; "not that such censure was foreign from their duty;" but, "that, in neglect-

ing it, they neglected their duty, and betrayed their trust." Would to God! they stood alone, to bear the weight of this heavy charge!

I know to many it may seem bold, and I am sure it is melancholy. But it is not more bold or melancholy, than it is true. The corruption, neglect, and depravity, of the priests, gave rise to the necessity of sending extraordinary prophets, for the purpose of correcting these enormities. The priests had become sharers in the spoils of oppression, and accomplices in its guilt; and, consequently, *deaf* to the word of the Lord, and *dumb* in the discharge of their duty. Attend to what follows, and judge for yourselves!

"The watchmen of Israel are blind—they are *all* ignorant—they are dumb dogs—they cannot bark; dreaming, lying down, loving to slumber. Yea, they are *greedy* dogs, which can never have enough; they all look to their own ways, *every one for his gain.* Come ye, say they, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; for to-morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant."

"The priests said not, where is the Lord? And they, who handle the law, knew me not; the pastors also have transgressed against me. From the prophet, even to the priest, every one dealeth

dealeth falsely. Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of thieves in your eyes?"

"Both prophet and priest are prophane; yea, in mine house, have I found their wickedness, saith the Lord. I have seen also, in the prophets of Jerusalem, an horrible thing! They walk in lies; they strengthen also the hands of evil-doers, that none doth return from his wickedness. They bite with their teeth, and cry peace; and he that putteth not into their mouths, they even prepare war against him!"

"There is a conspiracy of her prophets in the midst of her, like a roaring lion ravening the prey. They have devoured souls; they have taken the treasure and precious things. The priests have violated my law, and profaned my holy things: They have put no difference between the holy and profane; neither have they shewed difference between the unclean and the clean: and from them, profaneness is gone forth into all the land."

What a dreadful picture is here presented to the eye! A picture, surcharged with the odious colourings of ignorance, indolence, rapacity, and drunkenness; fraud, perversion of the law, profaneness, falsehood, and treachery! When we review this picture, as the faithful representation of the priesthood, can we be sur-

prised, that they were silent concerning the enormities of the rulers, which it was their duty to reprove? or the oppressions of the people, on whose spoils they revelled?—At the mission of extraordinary teachers who were to supply their neglects? or, the instructions to the prophets, who were to plead the cause of the people? "Feed the flock of the slaughter," saith the Lord, "whose possessors slay them, and hold themselves not guilty: and they who sell them, say, blessed be the Lord! I am rich: and their own shepherds pity them not. They eat the fat, and clothe themselves with the wool; they kill them that are fed, but feed not the flock. The diseased they have not strengthened, neither that which was sick: they have not bound up the broken, nor brought back that which was driven away, neither sought that which was lost: but with force, and with cruelty have they ruled them. Thus saith the Lord God, wo be to the shepherds of Israel, who feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flock? Wo unto the foolish shepherds who follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing! O Israel, thy prophets are like foxes in the desert. They have spoken vanity, and divine lies! saying, peace where there was no peace: therefore shall mine hand be upon them: they shall not be in the assembly of my people, neither shall they be written in the writing of the house of Israel: and ye shall know that I am the Lord."

Though

Though these passages are sufficient, not only to obviate the cavil I have mentioned, but to account for the silence of the established teachers of religion; and add stability to the fact, "that it was their duty to have exposed, reproved, and corrected, the prevailing enormities of rulers, and corruptions of government," I shall add another, which places the matter in a light still clearer.

"A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land! The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so!"

Here we see the falsehood of the prophets was subservient to the ambition and aggrandisement of the priests. By their means the people were blinded, and the priests promoted to places of authority and power among their brethren. In this case, we cannot be surprised, that they should slumber over the law, and be silent in behalf of the oppressed. But that such falsehoods should be pleasing to the people, whose oppressions they were calculated to multiply and confirm, at first view, is somewhat wonderful! Yet, so it was: "the people loved to have it so."

The fact is, man is the creature of habit, and the slave of his own indolence and fears. By long custom he may be reconciled to any thing.

And

And when once sunk into corruption, and pressed down into insignificance, all his powers of mind become enfeebled, and his sentiments perverted, the difference between right and wrong, dignity and meanness, honor and shame, is scarcely felt. To manly exertion he is a professed enemy. And at last, he becomes so totally debased, that truth itself is disagreeable. His only pleasure is, to hear the delusive fictions which flatter his insignificance, and masque his crimes. These he loudly calls for, and swallows with greediness; while he rejects with abhorrence, the sacred and salutary truths which recall him to his proper character, the assertion of his rights, and the recovery of his native dignity.

The address of the most high, by the prophet Isaiah, to his people, thus sunk into meanness, corruption, and depravity, is striking and awful. "Go," said he, "write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may be, for the time to come, for ever and ever; that this is a rebellious people, lying children—children who will not hear the law of the Lord: who say to the seers, see not; and to the prophets, prophesy not to us right things. Speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits. Wherefore, thus saith the Lord, because ye despise this word, and trust in oppression and perversion, and depend thereon; this iniquity shall

shall be to you as a breach ready to burst, a swelling in an high wall, whose breaking cometh suddenly, at an instant."

From the passages brought together on this subject, the following particulars appear plain and undeniable:

I. The controul of religion over governors, governments and nations.

II. Not only the right, but the duty of teachers, to expose, reprove, and censure, the partiality, oppression, and tyranny of rulers, the destructive influence of evil counsellors, and the corruption of governments.

III. That this duty extends, not only to the concerns of magistrates and people—governors and governed, but to leagues, treaties, and combinations of kings with kings, and nations with nations, for the purpose of injustice, oppression, and bloodshed. And,

IV. It has come to light, as by accident, from several of the passages I have quoted, that the necessity of sending extraordinary Prophets, to reprove and correct political fraud, oppression, and violence; and thereby, prevent national ruin, arose from the ignorance, indolence, covetousness, and profligacy of a worthless priesthood; and the meanness, obstinacy, and

and folly of a silly people, who preferred flattery and delusion to the law of the Lord, and the words of truth, soberness, and a sound mind.

These facts, thus fully substantiated, being evident from the holy scriptures, which, as the apostle tells us, " were given by inspiration, written for our admonition, and useful for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness;" I shall now shew that religion carries her authority farther still; and that the bible teaches us other doctrines equally important.

I. It teaches us, that as it is the duty of the teachers of religion to rebuke the partiality, injustice, and oppression of governors, and expose the abuses of government; so it is the duty of the people to call for and enforce reform.

II. That where any particular body, or description of men labours under partial grievances, hardships, or oppressions in a state, it is not only the duty of the existing government to redress and remove them; but where they may neglect such redress, or refuse it to the dutiful petition and remonstrance of the aggrieved, it is the duty of their brethren and fellow-subjects to espouse their cause, and support their claims, by every fair and justifiable mean.

In support of these lessons, I shall only recall your attention to two or three sentences of what I have already quoted.

" Wo

" Wo unto them who decree unrighteous decrees, and write grievousness, which they have prescribed; that is, who enact partial, unjust, and oppressive laws; to turn aside the needy from judgment, and to take away the right from the poor of my people."

" Hear the word of the Lord, O king of Judah, thou, and thy servants, and thy people, deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor, loose the bands of wickedness, undo the heavy burdens, and break every yoke: give ear unto the law of the Lord ye people; learn to do well, seek judgment, relieve the oppressed. Take away the wicked from before the king; and his throne shall be established in righteousness."

Here we see, that the commands, " seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, and take away the wicked from before the king," were directed, not only to the prince and his servants, but to the people: And in the words which follow, the displeasure of the Lord is expressed against them, because they did not demand of their rulers the restoration of their brethren to their rights and liberties, and a reform of the government, which took away, and with-held them. " This is a people robbed and spoiled! They are for a prey, and none saith restore. None calleth for justice, nor any pleadeth for truth: and the Lord was displeased, because there was no judgment."

These lessons, equally plain and important, are for the direction of every nation, and the instruction of all people, who believe the bible. It cannot be wrong, therefore, for us to learn, know, and practise them. Would to God, we had no occasion to apply them!

This, however, is not the case! Wisely as our government was originally constructed, and solidly founded in the principles of justice, and the rights of men; yet in the lapse of ages, it has been removed from its original foundation, perverted in its principles, deranged in its structure, and converted to a mis-shapen and monstrous pile of venality, corruption, and partiality!

That this is the case, requires no proof. The whole kingdom has long seen, and severely felt it. Nay, ministers have not only avowed it, but pleaded the necessity of corrupt influence for its support.

In conformity with this avowal, taxes are multiplied, and increased to such a degree, that the price of many articles, of most extensive consumption; and which, from habit, have become almost necessaries of life, is nearly doubled during the last ten years. And to what purpose? Not to support any army for the defence of the country! Thank God! we have no need of such. The genius of the country

try is roused; and its arm strung for its own defence!—Not to provide a fleet to protect our coasts, should danger threaten us!—Not to maintain the execution of law; or substantially promote agriculture, manufactures and commerce! No.—But to bribe the nominal representatives of one part of the people, to betray them, and make a prey of the whole—to support a burthensome, unprincipled, and imperious train of useless placemen, and beggarly pensioners—a voracious national poor list! whose lusts are insatiable, "whose teeth are as swords, and their jaw-teeth as knives, to devour the oppressed from off the earth, and the needy from among men!" And we have lately heard venal and oppressive corporations, and self-devoted factions, in almost every county of the kingdom, proclaiming this corruption and oppression, which they blasphemously call our constitution, the delight of their hearts; and pledging their lives and fortunes to support them.

In these circumstances, the nation could see no prospect of relief, or safety, but in a radical reform, which would remove all these evils; or a total revolution. From a just view of the convulsions and horrors which attend revolutions, and a conviction that nothing but incorrigible despotism, and dire necessity, can justify the experiment, they have wisely determined, in obedience to the call of duty, to look for, and demand reform. And though "oppression

sometimes makes wise men mad;" they have proceeded with temper, moderation, and order. Though "the multitude of their grievances has obliged them to complain, and the arm of the mighty to cry out;" the voice of sedition has not been heard, nor the hand of intemperance and riot raised. A solemn dignity has marked their steps; and the genius of the land has led them to demand the re-establishment of government on the principles of our happy constitution, of which the people's rights are the foundation, their will the law, and their happiness the end. And to their immortal honor, they have determined to seek, pursue, and obtain this great object, not by force or tumultuous violence, but by the wise and rational means which the constitution itself prescribes and sanctions—that is, by calling the people together, to consult coolly and deliberately on this interesting subject, that the public sentiment may be known, by free communication, and the public will concentered in a point, from which its expression may flow, with clearness, harmony, and strength into the houses of parliament, and the presence of majesty.

In this all seem to be agreed, except those who feed on the spoils of the poor, and wax fat by oppression; and those, who, for reasons best known to themselves, have resigned their principles, or spirit to express them, to some lordly leader.

To

To the former of these, the voice of religion, and the calls of duty need not be directed. To these their ears have been long shut, and their hearts insensible. The latter, however, would do well to consider the words of the prophet Isaiah, and the wise Solomon. "The leaders of this people cause them to err; and they, who are led of them, are destroyed. Him, who saith to the wicked, thou art righteous, will the people curse;—nations shall abhor him. But to them, who rebuke him, shall be delight; and a good blessing shall come upon them."

That the method proposed for obtaining reform, is the way of peace, as well as of prudence, every attentive mind must see. If pursued with unanimity and discretion, it must terminate in happiness. If not, "confusion and every evil work" may be reasonably expected from the present agitation of the public mind, and the provocations which have occasioned it. And, should division among the people tempt government to reject requisitions, founded in right, and sanctioned by religion, "to loose the bands of wickedness, and break the yoke of oppression," something more expressive than requisition may be justly dreaded; and He alone, whose eye looks forward through the infinity of ages, can pronounce upon the issue; while they, whose tyranny, or connivance

vance with tyranny, has provoked the public passions, must bear the guilt, and answer for the consequences.

The other lesson, of which I took notice, as recommended to our attention, by a variety of passages cited, arises from the debasement and oppression of part of a nation, by laws unjust in their principle, and partial in their operation. Where this is the case, we have clearly seen, that God has commanded their brethren to petition in their behalf; or, as it is expressed in scripture, "to plead their cause;" and say to their oppressors, RESTORE.

Does this lesson—dictate of pure humanity—and clothed with the authority of God, apply to us? Most assuredly! like all the other parts of scripture, it was written "for our instruction in righteousness;" and carries with it, in our case, severe reproof, and well-earned correction. Sorry I am, that it has so long, like many other lessons of the bible, been neglected, despised, and trampled under-foot, by the prevalence of prejudice, passion, and political faction. For never were partiality and injustice more conspicuous on earth, than they have been in the land of our nativity, for upwards of sixty years. Not a small part—but three fourths of its inhabitants—the great body of the people—have been reduced to the most abject and humiliating servitude; excluded from

from every office, honor, trust, and emolument of the state, which they uniformly supported by their industry, and enriched by their commerce; not only denied, but declared incapable of, real property: taxed in parliament, grand juries, and vestries, without consent, personal or representative; excluded from every mean of instruction, yet reproached, and punished, for their ignorance; deprived of the protection of the law, by being excluded from serving on juries; and prohibited the use of arms for the safety of their naked and defenceless persons.

The circumstances of this degradation render it as odious as it is intolerable. These are marked, not only with cruelty and injustice, but national perfidy. By the treaty of Limerick, on the faith of which the Roman Catholics of Ireland submitted to king William in 1691, they were to be secured in the enjoyment of rights and privileges, therein specified or alluded to. This treaty was signed by his majesty's commander of the army, and the lords Justices of Ireland; confirmed by the king and queen, under the great seal of England; solemnly ratified afterwards by an act of parliament; and continued inviolate for thirty-six years. During this period, they enjoyed the privileges, and exercised the rights guaranteed to them; those of serving on juries, and voting for members of parliament, not excepted; nor

nor did they incur the slightest imputation of disloyalty, or disaffection to government, from their bitterest enemies, though alarms of invasion were repeatedly spread, and a neighbouring nation convulsed by rebellion.

Yet in the year 1727, without fault or provocation on their part, the parliament chosen by them, in common with their protestant brethren, stripped them of every power and privilege of freemen, and in particular, left them incapable of joining in the election of another. Under all the incapacities which this and succeeding parliaments created, they continued till within these few years; and even now, the greatest and most opprobrious lie heavy upon them.

Yet still it is remarkable, that, during these sixty-five years of worse than Egyptian slavery, in which insult and ignominy have frequently added to oppression, they have never forfeited, by act or declaration, their character of unshaken loyalty to their king, and respectful obedience to government—that very government which reduced them to slavery, poverty, and wretchedness, and out-transubstantiating transubstantiation, continues to convert their flesh into bread, and their blood into wine, for communicants in iniquity. Nay, though rebellion again raised her head in a sister kingdom during that period; and we have had repeated

wars

wars with the nation, to whose humanity they owe what their hearts hold dearest, they have fought the battles of their country against her, both by sea and land! And on a late occasion, when the kingdom was robbed of the defence for which it liberally paid, for a purpose which policy disclaimed, humanity reprobated, and Heaven has defeated—when the fleets of that nation rode triumphant on our coasts, and government declared that protection rested with ourselves; instead of resentment, or cold indifference, they caught the patriotic flame which animated the kingdom, and gave birth to an army of citizen-soldiers unequalled in the records of the world. And though ye, in the hour of your darkness, rejected them from your ranks; be it known unto you, that in the other parts of the kingdom, they formed an important part of that illustrious body, who generously stood forward for the defence of their brethren—who received the united and well-earned thanks of lords, and commons, for the salvation of their country---and who shall live in the grateful remembrance of posterity, and admiration of the world, in spite of pithless proclamations, till the angel of God shall proclaim; "arise ye dead, and come to judgment." Nay, at this very moment, though the last voice which the patient, though oppressed, people heard, from the abettors of their oppressions, was fraught with the provoking accents: "your claims are

seditious; your hopes groundless, and your petitions vain---ye shall bear our chains for ever; and our yoke shall gall the necks of your posterity, to the end of the world"---At this moment I say, they are humbly supplicating a reversal of the stern decree, and praying from man, a restoration of the rights, which they received from God.

This is not a picture, but a faint sketch, of their grievances, their patience, and their patriotism. And when ye consider their degraded situation; the injustice and perfidy which reduced them to it; the length of time, through which it has been continued from father to son; the dutiful and loyal part which they have uniformly acted; and the offers of lives and fortunes which have been lately made to keep them in eternal degradation and wretchedness; I trust you will feel yourselves called upon---irresistibly called upon---by the united voice of religion, justice, and humanity, to join your intercessory voice with the language of their *petition*; "to plead the cause of the oppressed; to deliver the spoiled from the hand of the oppressor; and shew mercy and compassion, every man to his brother; lest the fury of the Lord go out like fire, and burn, that none can quench it, because of the evil of your doings."

Thus,

Thus, I hope, I have fully established the assertion with which I set out, in all its parts, both as it respects religion and her teachers. I have shewn that her controul, and their duty, extends to every rank of men; and their exhortations, reproofs, and corrections, to every violation of the law of God.

As this is denied, principally in respect to governors and states, I have produced a regular chain of evidence, in direct opposition to such denial.---Evidence, which clearly proves, that the sins of kings and people, governors and governed, states and individuals, come equally under their reproofs and corrections---nay, proves that, if politics, in the only proper sense of the word, are to be excluded from the pulpit, the greater part of the bible must be excluded with them.

I have likewise pointed out, by the passages quoted, those political sins, which religion most expressly condemns, and commands her teachers to expose, reprove, and endeavour to correct; together with the means which they used for effecting their reform.

I have farther considered the lessons, which we ought to learn and practice, from these passages of holy writ; and applied them to our own affecting situation.

And you will observe, that I have not, through the whole, admitted one consideration of human policy, or one principal of worldly wisdom, into what I have laid before you. I have only represented the principle laid down, and the duty arising from it, as they are founded in and supported by, the word of God. How far the adoption of the one, and the performance of the other, may affect the petty interests of this, or the other, political party, or the views of scheming monopolists, in politics, state-religion manufactures, or commerce, I have left to the plodding statesman, the mercenary worlding, and the interested partizan, to determine. That the principle is true, the lessons just, and the duties real, is enough for me. And that they are so, cannot be denied, if the bible speaks truth.

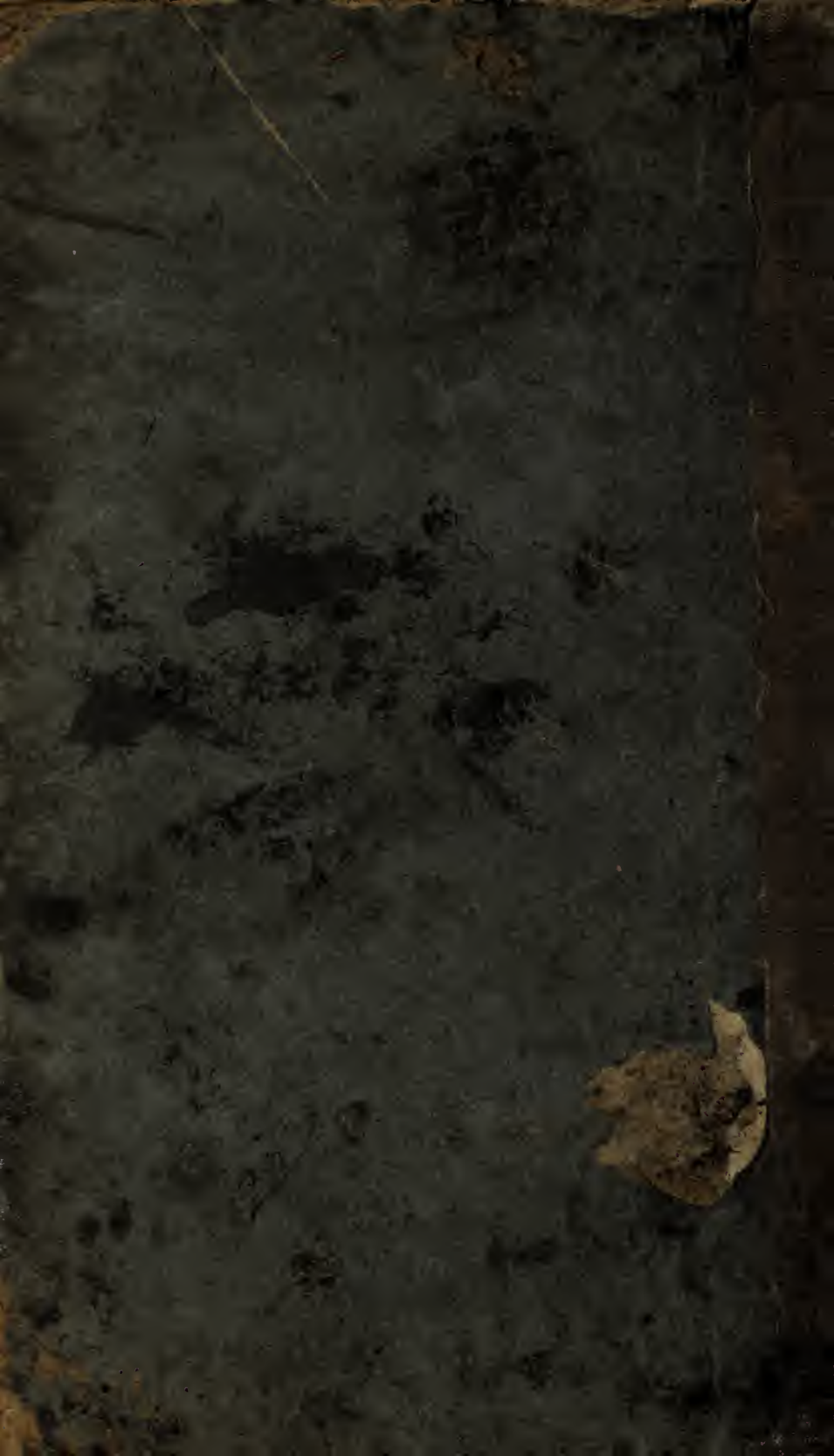
In the full conviction of this, I have laid the whole freely before you. What may be the effect, I leave with you, and Him who searcheth the heart, whose eye is upon you.

That some may be offended with me I cannot doubt. The oppressors of the earth, and the abettors of oppression, partiality, and rapine, with the whole train of the bigotted, the illiberal, and the corrupt, were offended with those, who first spoke the words, by the command and inspiration of God, which I have now repeated. Micaiah was insulted, and imprisoned; Jeremiah

miah threatened with death for attempting to reform and save his country; the apostles persecuted for speaking the truth; and, what should weigh more than ten thousand examples, the blessed Jesus was accused of rebellion, by a blind-led seditious, and head-strong multitude, and crucified as a blasphemer. Why, then, should I be surprised, if all such be offended with me? I will not be surprised; neither will I be afraid. Firm, "as an iron pillar, or wall of brass," I'll stand erect, to declare the truth of the bible, and enforce your duty, while God vouchsafes me understanding to know, and heart to feel, and a tongue to express them.

On the other hand, I know many will be pleased and gratified. Let me only entreat such, that their pleasure may not terminate, like that of the people of Israel, as described by the Lord, to the prophet Ezekiel. "Son of man, the children of thy people speak one to another, every one to his brother, saying, come, I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh forth from the Lord. They come unto thee, as the people cometh; and they sit before thee, as my people; and they hear thy words, but they will not do them; for with their mouth they shew much love; but their heart goeth after their covetousness. And lo! thou art unto them

them as a very lovely song, of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not."

Preached to the Presbyterian congregation of Portaferry, January 13, 1793.

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